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vol. 2 no. 5

Writer's Digest

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APRIL

Devoted to the Writing of Poems, Photoplays, Short Stories, Popular Songs, Etc.

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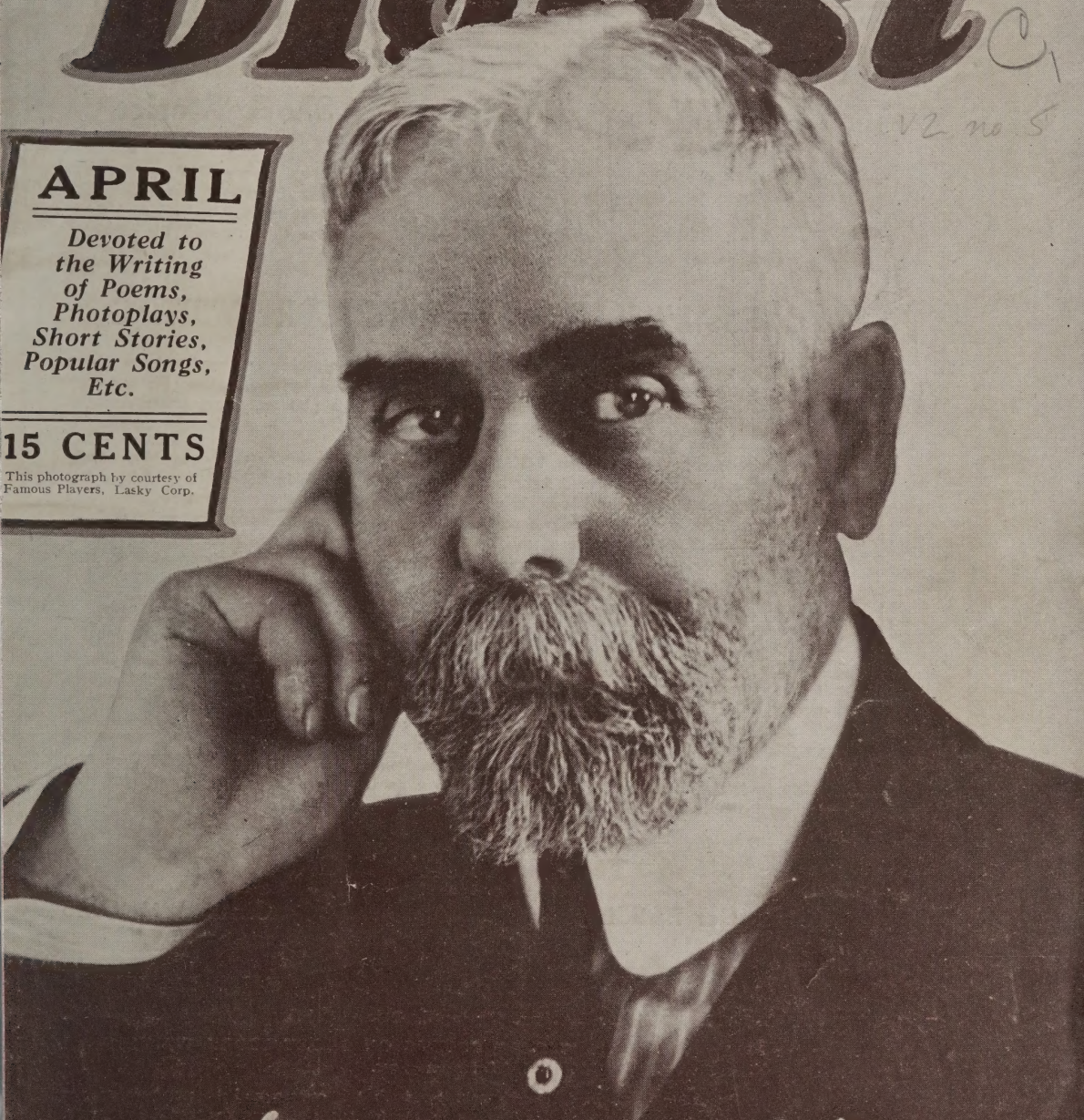

Sir Gilbert Parker

NOVELIST — PHOTOPLAYWRIGHT.

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THE WRITER'S DIGEST

Formerly "Successful Writing"

A Monthly Journal on Writing Photoplays, Short Stories, Poems, Popular Songs, Etc.

VOLUME II. APRIL, 1922. NUMBER 5.

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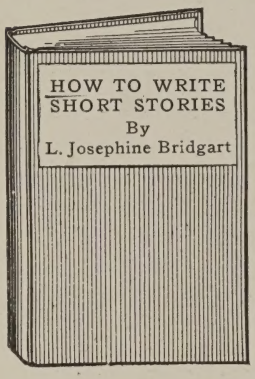

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CASH PRIZE CONTEST

My Experience with Editors

Turn to page nine in this issue and read Miss Bridgart's article, "How to Meet the Editors." Doesn't that recall experiences of your own? We think that it will, and we think that the most interesting of these will be appreciated by the readers of THE WRITER'S DIGEST. We want you to tell your most interesting experience in not more than five hundred words. For the best article on this subject received before May 1st we will give a prize of $10.00. For the second best article we will give a prize of $5.00, and for the third best, $3.00. Pick the most interesting experience you have had—maybe it's a kick, perhaps it's a pleasant encounter, but be sure that you tell it well and in an entertaining style.

PLEASE OBSERVE THESE RULES

SUBJECT—"My Experience With Editors." Make it your most interesting experience, and we suggest that you stick to facts.

LENGTH—Articles to be considered in this contest must not be over five hundred words in length.

APPEARANCE—Manuscripts must be carefully prepared, typewritten, if possible. Neatness will, of course, be considered in the award of prizes.

PRIZES—The best article received will be awarded the first prize of $10.00. A second prize of $5.00 will be awarded the next best article, and a third prize of $3.00 will be awarded the third best contribution.

CONTEST CLOSES—All manuscripts to be considered must be in this office at five P. M., April 29th, 1922.

ADDRESS MANUSCRIPTS—Please address all manuscripts for consideration to The Contest Editor, THE WRITER'S DIGEST, Butler Building, Cincinnati, Ohio. Manuscripts not addressed in this manner will be treated as regular contributions, and will not be considered in the contest.

KEEP COPIES—Manuscripts submitted in this contest cannot be returned, so please keep a carbon copy.

Announcement of the awards and the three winning articles will be published in the June issue of THE WRITER'S DIGEST.

Anybody who cares to submit an article in accordance with the rules above is eligible for a prize in this contest. Your manuscripts are welcome, and each and every one will receive the careful attention of the judges who will select the winners.

Send your manuscript to

THE CONTEST EDITOR

THE WRITER'S DIGEST

BUTLER BUILDING CINCINNATI, OHIO

THE WRITER'S DIGEST

FORMERLY "SUCCESSFUL WRITING"

A MONTHLY JOURNAL ON WRITING PHOTOPLAYS, SHORT STORIES, POEMS, POPULAR SONGS, Etc.

VOLUME II. APRIL, 1922. NUMBER 5.

LENGEL OF HEARST'S—EDITOR AND WRITER

By W. Adolphe Roberts.

I HAVE always maintained the heretical view that the best editor is the man, or woman, who is also a working writer. This in spite of the late Jack London's jaundiced dictum to the effect that all editors were disappointed creatures that had once dreamed of writing, and upon discovering their limitations had turned to office jobs. In spite, too, of the notable exceptions to the rule.

My opinion rests upon the belief that only the working writer can get the finest results from his fellow-craftsmen, can understand their problems and help them to strike the all-important balance between art and business. He is more likely to recognize originality when he sees it than is the purely commercial manufacturer of magazines. And as the success of a publication depends upon the quality of its fiction and special articles (no matter what the advertising department may think), the editor who co-operates most sympathetically with his writers is the best editor for all concerned.

I have chosen William Charles Lengel, of *Hearst's International,* as the subject of this sketch because his extremely varied career in the magazine game illustrates my point to perfection.

Several years ago, while I was editor of *Ainslee's Magazine,* Lengel brought me a short story called "Inspirational Stuff." It was a clever take-off of the modern type of business magnate who assumes he has a message to impart to the public. Most of the readers of this magazine must be familiar with the signed homilies which John Wanamaker features in the newspaper advertisements of his department stores. Those that live in New York have no doubt laughed over the moral vaporings of the *"Subway Sun."*

Lengel had taken this sort of thing and constructed an adroit tale about a banker, a professional writer who turned out the "stuff" for him—and, of course, a girl. The characterization was excellent and the humor pointed. I published the story, following it with another almost as good. Both made a hit with our readers. In the meantime, he had been breaking into the *Red Book* and other magazines with his better-known "Tin Pan Alley" stories.

For me, he is primarily the author of "Inspirational Stuff," which revealed in him a talent for subtle satire that I hope he will develop at the expense of his sentimental and more popular vein. Probably, my feeling about this story is enhanced by the fact that when he wrote it, he was himself acting as press agent for the ideals of the virtuous business man.

In the course of a number of conversations, Lengel has given me the following piquant details regarding his life:

As a youngster in Kansas City, Mo., he was determined, for no sound reason that he could afterwards discover, to be a lawyer. He could not afford to go to college, so he got a job as an office boy with a legal firm and studied in his spare time. When he was ready to take the examinations, he was still under age, and had to scrap with the board of examiners for the privilege of appearing before it. Red tape caused his

name to be omitted from the first list of successful candidates, but at last an exception in his favor was made and he was admitted to the bar.

I asked him whether this had given him his first great thrill.

"On the very day the list of candidates was published," he answered, laughing, "the *Kansas City Star* printed my first and only poem. The few sticks of type with my name at the end of them thrilled me far more than anything connected with the examination."

Clearly, he had printer's ink in his blood.

He practised law, however, for two years—somewhat half-heartedly, it is to be feared, since he was planning most of the time to become a newspaper man and toying in his really weak moments with the notion of going on the stage. He wrote editorial paragraphs for the Kansas City *Post,* at the suggestion of the managing editor, "Billy" Williams, with whom he formed a close friendship that lasted until Williams' death a year or two ago. He also wrote a one-act play, and as a preparation for producing it himself, he attended a school of acting.

One Monday, while he was killing time in his office with a friend, he proposed on an impulse that they go to New York the following Thursday. The other took the dare, and Lengel promptly closed out his office and left on the appointed day.

His earliest literary enthusiasm had been for the work of Booth Tarkington, his second for the short stories of O. Henry. Now he found himself in O. Henry's Manhattan-on-the-Subway, and the glamor of the other experiences paled by comparison. He lived on Broadway, near 66th Street, and watched the world of actors, shop girls, sports and stenographers go by. He dreamed of becoming a writer of short stories himself, but in the meantime it was necessary to get a job.

Down to his last dollar bill or two, he was lunching at Joubert's—an amazing restaurant patronized by actors, where one could get a table d'hote meal for a quarter—when he noticed an advertisement in a "Help Wanted" column. It stated that the editor of a great magazine needed a private secretary, and set forth in discouraging detail the many qualifications that the aspirant must have. Lengel was not even a stenographer, but he sent in what was doubtless the shortest and most businesslike application that the advertisement drew.

"Perhaps I am the man you want," he wrote.

A few days later, he was asked to call at the Butterick Building and see Charles Hanson Towne. The latter, who was then an associate editor, told him that Theodore Dreiser, the editor of the *Delineator* and the man who was looking for a secretary, was a very exacting boss. The name of Dreiser meant nothing to Lengel at the time. Afterwards, "Sister Carrie" became one of the profound influences in his writing life and Theodore Dreiser his acknowledged master among American novelists.

He went to work for the ogre, though with his rudimentary knowledge of a secretary's duties he did not expect to last longer than a week. Nor did he. Dreiser complimented him on the letters he had been turning out, added that they were by no means the letters that had been dictated, and promoted him to be a reader of manuscripts.

It is almost fantastic to record that Lengel's next job was as manager of an office building in Wichita, Kansas. When he told me that such had been the case, I declined to believe him. He offered proofs and said something about having become temporarily discouraged about his prospects as a writer. Nevertheless, I still find it odd to think of Lengel as the manager of an office building. I can imagine him as a lawyer, a press agent, an intimate of the strange world of "Tin Pan Alley." But as the guardian, at a plutocrat's salary, of tenents in Wichita, Kansas—no, I cannot picture it.

He made a success of the venture, and learned a great deal about real estate and construction problems. But he could not have enjoyed himself much, because he admits he regarded with envy a reporter who called on him every day for news items and whose pay was ten times smaller than his own. Before long, he yielded to temptation, chucked the office building and became a reporter himself at $12 a week.

Returning to New York, he joined the staff of *Musical America.* The salary was small, but he had all the seats he wanted to grand opera and through one season, at least, he felt that that was ample compensation.

Turning his Wichita experiences to account, he wrote an article called "The Story

of the Building Deutscher Built," which made a reputation for him among the trade magazines and opened a vein which he followed for several years. He was connected with *Building Management,* edited the *Real Estate Magazine,* Chicago, and finally landed with W. J. Hoggson, the well known New York architect and builder. He started a really remarkable house organ, *Hoggson's Magazine,* the articles in which were so clever and well written that they could be read with pleasure by persons not interested in their technical side. I used to run with delight through the little publication. It would undoubtedly have grown had not the war hit the building trades hard and made it necessary to discontinue it.

After leaving Hoggson, Lengel became an associate editor of *Munsey's Magazine* under Bob Davis. Then, for seven months, he was promotion manager of *Vanity Fair* and the other Nast publications. He tried the movies, as an editor for Fox; but he found the work unsympathetic. Ray Long brought him over to the Hearst organization as publicity director of the Cosmopolitan Book Corporation, and one year ago promoted him to be managing editor of *Hearst's International Magazine.*

The author of a sketch like this one almost invariably states that his subject is modest. Usually it is not true. At the risk of being unjustly suspected of living up to a convention, however, I must insist that William Charles Lengel is modest. When he learned that I proposed to tell the readers of the WRITER'S DIGEST about him, he was worried lest I should write too much in the spirit of personal friendship. I assured him that I had no intention of eulogizing him, that I would record the facts and express a few opinions about his talent as a writer which I would have held if I had not known him from Adam. This I have done.

It seems to me that an editor who has been through the mill, as Lengel has been, and who no matter how he has earned his living has never neglected his own creative work, is the type of editor with whom writers should prefer to deal. Inevitably, he is cordial to the new writer. On *Hearst's,* unsolicited manuscripts are considered just as sympathetically as those signed with well-advertised names. Why should it not be so? Lengel himself has known what it means to send in stories as an unknown and anxiously to await the editor's verdict.

CLIPPINGS—THEIR USE AND ABUSE

By N. Tourneur.

TO the writer of articles, feature and other, there is hardly anything outside the range of practical experience which is so invaluable as cuttings. Every newspaper office that takes itself with importance has a clippings department, where the scissors and paste-pot and brush are kept busy, and cuttings are filed away for current and future use. So when a "story" comes into the office, the matter can, if required, be rendered more clear and detailed, or supplied with portraits and other illustrations.

To the individual writer also an extensive "library" of clippings, when well chosen and kept up to date, is almost inexhaustible, skilfully utilized, as a source of "dope." The hours and irksome discipline it entails, if the possessor of it is intent on being abreast of the times, together with an eye to the future, represents, as it were, only the investment of so much capital in renewing the stock of information he or she has to draw upon. But, there is a use, and an abuse also, of clippings, that call for comment and stricture.

As a famous freelance once said to the writer, there are only two lines of cuttings the matter of which soon becomes of practically no use — fashions and politics. Though in this category "personals" on leading politicians and publicists are not to be included. These "personals," when judiciously chosen with regard to the person concerned, and the information given, to a turn of the wheel of fortune may enable one to get in a heavy crop of checks, when the said personages loom up into topical importance.

The proper use of clippings must be ever kept in mind. It is to afford special information, not chunks of matter. It is all right to soak yourself in this information, and then serve it up after your own style, plus fresh matter, and from a different viewpoint or plane of interest. It is all

(*Continued on page 12.*)

Courtesy Dodd, Mead & Co.

OCTAVUS ROY COHEN.

Negroes, detectives, and golf are the three favorite graces of Octavus Roy Cohen, author of the new thriller, MIDNIGHT, and not the least of these is golf. Here the youthful author is shown on the links at Birmingham, Ala., for his daily attack on Colonel Bogie.

Mr. Cohen is one of the highest paid short story writers in America. He has recently won first prize of $5,000 in a short story contest in Photo Play Magazine. Over two thousand stories were submitted in the contest.

HOW TO MEET THE EDITORS

One of a series of Articles on the business side of writing especially prepared for the readers of the Writer's Digest.

By L. Josephine Bridgart.
Writer and Critic.

A YOUNG woman who sells her manuscripts saw the outline for this series of articles. "Oh," she exclaimed, "I wish you'd have circulars about it scattered all through the country villages! Do you know, when I began trying to write I didn't understand that there were books on authorship? I didn't even know there were magazines on purpose for writers. I don't suppose you'll believe it, but when I was quite a big girl I thought the editors wrote all there was in each magazine! Is it any wonder I didn't know how to get a start?"

I don't suppose there are very many young girls with literary aspirations as unsophisticated as this, but I find that a very great many new writers have very erroneous ideas about the editors. If they could correct these they would not only be very much more comfortable in their minds, but they would stand a very much better chance of succeeding with these same editors.

I once received a letter from a man who referred to the editors as those "whose business it is to discourage and whose pleasure to insult writers." Now an editor can no more afford to make enemies of the writers than a theatrical manager can afford to make enemies of the actors and actresses. The manager can't keep his theatre open unless he has someone to play. The editor can't publish his magazine unless he has someone to write. His business is producing a magazine that the public will think worth buying; his pleasure is in the finding of material which will help to make up such a magazine. He should be approached, not as a god in whose hands are the issues of life and death, not as a friend who can do you a favor if he will, but as a business man. If he rejects your offering he does so for just one reason: He believes it will be no help to him in producing the magazine his patrons want.

"Why can't he explain then?" explodes some indignant young writer. "How long would it take him to write a courteous little personal note, pointing out why he believes the manuscript w o u l d n't please his readers? I wouldn't mind getting my stories back if it weren't for those nasty l i t t l e rejection slips, which explain nothing!"

It doesn't take very long to write one little note; it takes a good deal of time to write fifty or a hundred or a thousand. When a busy foreman advertises for a boy and he has fifty applicants he doesn't take each one of the forty-nine by the hand and explain just why he can't employ him; if the applications are in writing the foreman doesn't spend a whole evening answering them. He may be the kindest, most courteous man in his city but he wouldn't consider it a good investment of his time to spend it pointing out the specific deficiencies of the unsuccessful applicants or in explaining why the successful applicant seemed to him more suited to his needs.

If some young woman writer is interrupted in her writing or her baking by the ringing of the bell and finds a salesman or peddler smiling on her doorstep she doesn't take him into her study or kitchen and explain just why she doesn't need a machine or a cake of soap. If she says courteously, "Not today!" she feels that she has done her whole duty. Why should

This article has won its place in these columns not because of any desire to pat our brother editors on the back, but because of a firm belief in the efficacy of co-operation. If the writer is to advance in his chosen profession, it must be through the co-operation of and with the editors. Such co-operation can be obtained only through a better understanding of editorial characteristics. Let your mind climb to the editor's side of the fence, and catch his viewpoint, and we'll guarantee you a more pleasant and profitable relationship in the future.

THE EDITOR.

she let her cake burn or her precious idea fly out of the window while she is discussing something she doesn't want with a person whose only interest in her lies in the fact that she may have money to spend? You can't expect a business man to give you very much of anything for nothing, whether it's time or writing-paper or sympathy.

The editor is pretty sure to fend you off with rejection slips until he is convinced that he may want to "do business" with you, if not just now, then at some other time. If he finds that you have taken the trouble to get into sympathy with his policy he will usually show his appreciation by personal notes, as kindly as they are sincere and explanatory.

I remember a time when two magazines seemed to me particularly unapproachable. I had tried each a number of times and had my offerings rejected with printed letters that some way seemed to hurl me down to the foot of an iceberg, cold, immense, unscalable. Then one day I happened upon a copy of a little magazine for authors published by Mr. Hills, and in this was a letter to contributors, written by the editors of one of the two inaccessibles. It explained just what kind of manuscripts the editor wanted. I tried hard to produce that kind. After that the editor invariably either wrote me a cordial note of acceptance or an equally cordial note, explaining just why he was returning my manuscript.

The second magazine is a "big" one. I had sent it only an occasional manuscript; I had a kind of horror of those lengthy printed letters of rejection. But I happened upon some material that I felt might really satisfy the editors. I gathered it into three articles and respectfully submitted them for examination, and, behold, I had called forth a by no means brief personal letter! The editor explained that he had use for only a part of the material; he offered me a very satisfactory sum for that part, with the understanding that he was to keep the whole series and pick out what he wanted, I to be free to use what was left over as I chose. I accepted the offer, supposing, of course, that I should have to wait until the publication of the available matter before I could remold and attempt to market the rest. But soon after my check arrived the editor sent me all the sheets or parts of sheets he had decided not to use and told me I was now at liberty to proceed with the material as I saw fit. I promptly regrouped it and soon had a second check almost as large as the first to show for my series.

When next I had occasion to address the editor of the inaccessible publication I thanked him for his thoughtfulness in returning the left-over material at once and told him that I had been able to sell it promptly to a certain rival magazine. He replied, expressing great pleasure in the sale. Since that he has not only invariably sent me a personal letter with every acceptance or returned manuscript but almost always acknowledges the receipt of anything I offer him with a cordial personal note, expressing a hope that my contribution will prove available and telling me about how soon I may hope for a report.

I have in my desk a three-page letter in long-hand from an editor who not only was willing to explain why he couldn't use an article of mine, but wanted to convert me to believing just as he did about the matter under discussion! Back of the rejection there is always the individual business man, but back of the business man there is always a personality, sometimes suave and sometimes gruff, but usually, I think, kindly and never, I am sure, a monster of cruelty or ignorance.

A correspondent wrote me that he understood it was impossible to sell manuscripts unless one had "a pull" with the editor through some friend or relative. Again and again the young writers want to know if it's possible to succeed without having "a big name."

I once offered an editor with whom I was associated a manuscript of my own. In my office work I had tried in every possible way to please him and he had shown himself happy to do me a personal favor. Ten days after my manuscript was submitted I was told that it had been accepted. "But," said the editor, "if it hadn't been what I wanted I'd have turned it down without mercy! I never allow my personal interest in a contributor to affect my editorial judgment."

I saw a letter of his to a fellow editor in which he stated that he never glanced at the name upon a manuscript until he had occasion to address the author.

One day a young man who assisted the president of our concern brought into the office two manuscripts which he said had been written by a certain author. Her name is so well known that I think every reader

would recognize it if I gave it. I read the manuscripts, wondered if it could be possible that the young man had written them himself and then laid them on the editor's desk. There was no name on them and I left Billy, the young man, to make his own explanation.

A few hours afterwards the editor tossed the two manuscripts on my desk. "Read those," he told me, "and then guess who wrote them."

I bent over the manuscripts for a while and then glanced up as innocently as I could. "I guess ——," I announced.

The editor stared at me for a moment, and then he laughed. "Oh," he exclaimed, "somebody told you!"

But he was a red-headed editor and after he'd thought about the manuscripts a little longer he grew angry. "The idea of her sending us such stuff as that!!" he burst out. "Tell Billy we don't want 'em at any price! If she has anything worth while to show us we'll be glad to look it over, but we're not printing trash by anybody!"

I'm not claiming that a name counts for nothing. Of course it does. If a well-known writer here sends in a good story and a brand-new writer sends in one just as good but no better, of course the editor will take the one by the well-known writer. There are two good reasons for his doing so: If he chooses the story by the unknown writer he must depend entirely upon his own judgment, which may not be correct; if he chooses the famous writer he is supported by the judgment of a great many other editors and thousands of readers. His stronger reason, however, is the advertising value of the "big name."

A club to which I belong has been giving a series of musical recitals. We've had Shumann-Heink, Gadski, Ysaye, Paderewski. We've had to pay each one a thousand dollars or more. But we've taken in over two thousand dollars at each concert. We didn't have to explain to our fellow-citizens that Shumann-Heink and Gadski could sing and Ysaye and Paderewski could play. The names were a guarantee that the entertainments would be worth spending money on.

A minister told me that while he was in the theological seminary he spent his vacation time working in a saw factory, and one night the employes gathered in a hall and gave an impromptu concert. Among the performers was a tenor who sang so pleasingly that the end of his part was the signal for vociferous applause. When the man did not hasten back to the platform someone, fearing that the next number would be given, called, *"Encore! Encore!"*

This did not meet the views of a new employe, an Englishman, who rose in his seat and said loudly: *"Encore* be hanged! Let the same chap sing again!"

Often the editor would like to print a story that pleases him and suppress one that personally he does not like at all. But he thinks of the reader who will scan the cover page of his magazine in search of the very name he's tempted to omit and if that name isn't there buy the other editor's magazine. It's the public's rather than the editor's fault that "the same chap" is allowed to come before the foot-lights so often.

After you're near the top, remembering the long, hard, what David Graham Phillips called the "sweaty" climb, you'll see some fairness in the "big name" helping to win acceptances and more fame. You won't think it unfair that you receive five cents a word when the new writer receives only one, or fifteen cents when he can't get more than three. It would seem to you very unjust if any newcomer could snatch your hardly won success out of your hand before you'd had time even to taste its sweetness.

Remember for your comfort that all writers were new once. It may be true that "poets are born and not made," but it is just as true that no writer is born famous. I can remember the first time I had a book of Barrie's handed me and the first time I heard the name *Rudyard Kipling.* A great admirer of Stevenson told me that the first book of Stevenson's he read was *Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde.* He bought the book on a train, while coming home after a professional visit out of town, and he said that the story made such a powerful impression upon him (though the name of the author meant nothing to him at that time) that he walked up and down the aisle of the car to give vent to his agitation. We all have the same avenues of approach to the editors and to the public as those open to Barrie or Stevenson or Kipling. If no new writer could succeed we English-speaking nations would have but one book in our own tongue; we should have nothing to peruse but the work of the father of our literature, the revered Beowulf.

Far be it from me to declare the editor infallible. Being human, it stands to reason that his judgment is imperfect. Mr. McClure tells us that when Kipling brought his entire output to America and offered it to Harper and Brothers it was rejected to the last manuscript. But we writers oughtn't to feel superior over that bit of mis-judgment. Some of us fail to find anything in Kipling's poems, some of us wonder what our parents saw in Jane Austen, and some of us, I very much fear, don't read our Shakespeare for pleasure.

Take what consolation you can in the editor's fallibility but don't be angry or spiteful when he rejects your manuscript. And don't be despairing. There are a good many editors in the literary world and you have reason to expect that some day one of them will appreciate whatever real merit your work has.

If the "Big Four" won't buy your manuscripts it doesn't follow that they won't sell to smaller fellows, and perhaps the readers of the smaller magazines are just as well worth reaching as those who subscribe for the Century and Scribner's and Harper's and the Atlantic Monthly. If, as you claim, your chief reason for writing is that you have something to say it should not be so much matter what sort of a platform you stand on or how your hearers are dressed or how much remuneration you receive, so long as you can gain an audience.

One of Longfellow's characters says to another: "If you find a lady who pleases you very much and you want to marry her and she will not listen to such a horrid proposition I see but one thing for you to do, and that is to find another lady who pleases you still more and who will listen to it."

If one editor won't accept your offering proceed to pay court to another one, your courage still up and your heart still whole.

Clippings—Their Use and Abuse

(*Continued from page 7.*)

right to run details suitably together, garnered from such sources; but they must be run into your own mould; and your own mould must be an original one.

It is all wrong, and dishonest both to yourself and your editor and public, to append some few lines of a new "lead" of your own to a slab of matter practically as you find it in the clipping. It is all wrong, and dishonest, to use it as a "run-on"—stolen matter, it is then—without any regard as to the harm done to the original author of it, or, again, the question of copyright.

This is the abuse of cuttings.

There is, too, a danger in making much use of clippings that do not entail first-hand research.

The writer has an acquaintance, who has twenty years' cuttings to work upon. He disdains an appointment, although he is or rather was one of the best of newspapermen. After spending an hour in selecting his "work" for the day, he comfortably clicks out 3,000—4,000 words, and as he has a far-ranging market for his stuff among the dailies, weeklies, and the lesser monthlies, he wins an income of enviable amount. But, X—— has sold himself for a mess of pottage and toothsome garnishings.

X—— is incapable, now, of original output. A "re-write," cleverly done, and most attractively, marks his limit. If, on a commission coming in, X—— finds he has nothing in his "library" dealing with the subject, he has to decline it—"Sorry! Full up for the next three weeks and more." His abuse of cuttings has atrophied his originality—his capability of thinking and producing along his own lines as an individual. But, X—— lives—lives easily—and knows not what it is to have to stint.

In some things many a writer's conscience is curiously lax; and in nothing so much as the proper use of cuttings. Clip—clip, by all means. Yet, when using the clipping, don't filch another person's property.

PRAISE FOR LARDNER

Since so many reviewers and column conductors have recently touted Ring Lardner's "The Big Town," it is interesting to discover the following paragraph in H. L. Mencken's "The American Language":

"Lardner is a very accurate observer. As yet the academic critics have failed to discover him, but soon or late such things as "The Busher's Honeymoon" are bound to find a secure place in the literature of the United States. His influence, indeed, is already considerable, and one sees it plainly in such things as Sinclair Lewis' "Main Street."

The clever and highly contemporaneous Mencken is never far from the head of the procession.

THE VAUDEVILLE SONG MARKET

By George Elwyn.

ONE of the most fertile and profitable markets for the ambitious young song writer is seemingly being entirely overlooked. This tremendous field, vaudeville —now a national institution, one might say —is but little understood by the thousands of writers capable of writing expressly for it.

In the December number of THE WRITER'S DIGEST, Mr. Lee Ice, in a very instructive article, analyzes the chances and percentages the writer of a popular song has for disposing of his wares to the present day publisher. Mr. Ice knows whereof he speaks, and it was his view of the situation that brought to my mind certain opportunities—and golden ones—for the song writer, and incidently motivated these few remarks.

> We are indeed pleased to publish this article, which points out an opportunity for the song writer, in the hope that it will open up a new market for a number of our readers.
>
> Mr. Elwyn has promised us another article, to appear in the near future, which will tell how to reach the vaudeville artist and to place your songs before him. The general lines that should be followed and other important facts that will assist the writer will also be discussed.

Briefly, these opportunities consist of writing special songs—"material" is the technical word—for vaudeville performers; or, to use the newer name for them, vaudeville artists. And, strange to say, the average amateur song writer adopts a style of writing that is generally more nearly suited for the stage than for the popular song publisher.

There are many reasons for this. The publisher must have subjects for his songs that have appeal to the universe at large, while the stage demands subjects having to do with a particular incident, comedy situation, or telling a little story. The inexperienced, and especially the young writer, is prone to adopt his own personal emotions and affairs of the heart as his themes for his lyrics. Oftentimes, however, these make ideal lyrics for stage purposes, and no doubt many a rejected song lyric contains a good idea-germ for a stage number.

Vaudeville is in a class by itself. Its own peculiar sphere is speculated upon by many, and understood by but few. Yet, its demands upon the song writer are comparatively simple. Also, writing songs for vaudeville artists offers a start in the right direction to the young writer. Greatly in his favor is the fact that the present day vaudeville performer is seeking and searching for new material, and will pay well for it. Almost without exception, every vaudeville star or headliner using comedy material employs a writer permanently to supply them with new, up-to-date stuff. These professional writers charge enormous prices. The artist is forced to pay it because no one else can supply him. There are thousands of amateur writers, or even professional writers who can supply a lot of this material if they will trouble themselves to acquire the vaudeville "slant." The artist will be only too glad to accept suitable stuff from the unknown outsider in order to unleash himself from the heart-breaking prices demanded by the professional.

In writing a song for a vaudeville artist to use on the stage, the writer must have an *idea* to begin with. For it is the *idea* that is the basic reason for the creation of any song. Upon the degree of strength embodied in the idea depends, more or less, the success of the song. He who attempts to write at random, merely rhyming the last words of the lines, is to be pitied. Of the hundreds of manuscripts I've examined, three of every four seemed to follow this rule. Only a few complete, carefully worked ideas were discovered, suitable for print. However, among them were many which would have made ideal vaudeville songs, but at that time we were seeking "hits" for publication only.

Vaudeville, like everything else, travels in "cycles." Not long ago, slap-stick and "hokum" and anything else productive of laughs was booked. Today, there is a newer order of things, and the two comedians who used to retort to spitting in each

other's eye for "comedy" now have no place on the vaudeville stage. The powers that be in vaudeville have applied the refining process, and with increasing daily success. This means that thousands of artists must dig up from somewhere new, clean comedy songs and material, and that someone must write these for them. Which brings the present "cycle" around to the "written to order" stage.

Here I will digress for a few lines for purposes of illustration. One afternoon, not long ago, I sat in the back row of one of the New York "try-out" theatres in company with several of the big "bookers" of one of our largest vaudeville circuits. A booker is the man who passes judgment as to the value and worth of an act, and who makes up the completed program for a theatre. After three acts had come and gone, each well known to the booking men, out came a new act, never yet reviewed by them. The act consisted of two men, a "straight" and a comedian. The bookers, ever on the alert for new faces with new, fresh material, sat up, interested, ready to see what this unknown act had to offer. With great fanfare of trumpets, out galloped the team. After their opening gag, the bookers sat back in their seats, one by one, each plainly registering disappointment. For, to give them credit, the "bookies" are ever on the alert to "discover" new and promising talent. The men went blithely on with their act, unaware that they had already been put to the test and—rejected. The audience, however, was laughing long and loud at their antics, and the two men were patting themselves on the back, congratulating themselves on the big hit they were registering, and of the contracts and long "route" that must surely follow. When they called at the offices the next day, and were told that the circuit could not use their act, they were paralyzed with astonishment, and called the bookers' attention to the fact of their apparent success. The office told them patiently that their act consisted entirely of slap-stick and pure "hokum," and that their jokes and "routine" comprised a little bit of nearly every other act in the business. Which was the truth.

Following this two-man team, came a niftily-dressed man and woman team, both looking spic and span. Their opening consisted of a specially-written introductory number, with pointed catch-lines for each, and here the bookers sat up in earnest. Then followed a well written routine of up-to-date nifties, the talk following a well defined thread, leading up to a specially built-to-order song, and closing with a neat little dance. The couple was no riot or panic or anything like that—they simply offered a dandy, squarely built, pleasing little vehicle, sans all obvious or odious methods of gaining their laughs, and the bookers recognized at once that the team had invested good money in their act and material, and, while this act walked off the stage with just about enough applause to warrant taking one bow, they were rewarded for their efforts and "cleanliness" with several months profitable work.

Just as the photo-drama demands continuity, with the photo-comedy now falling in line, so does the modern, specially-written built-to-order vaudeville act, or vehicle, as it is called. Behind the offering must be a *reason*, and this reason must be carried out from beginning to end. Hence the suddenly increasing demand for the specially written vaudeville song, written around and fitted to the peculiar or particular personality of the person who eventually "sells" it across the footlights to the audience.

Another element driving vaudeville artists to the buying of written-to-order songs is the present short life of the "popular" song, and the squabbling and clashing at rehearsals, when two or more acts on the same bill desire to use the same song. This serious condition has grown to be no small menace to the business. Finally the rule was made that first at rehearsal shall have the right to the particular song in question.

The professional writer of special songs for vaudeville has been quick to realize his value, and his prices have soared beyond the reach of the "small time" act. The "big time" headliner pays from $200 up to $1,000 or even more for a specially written song. And these acts, in most cases, even furnish the author with the idea, outlining to the author approximately about what they wish written.

Now, here is where the clever amateur song-writer comes in, for many a talented amateur can turn out lyrics as good, if not better, than the professional. But first, let me explain the difference between the big-timer and the small-timer. The highest type of theatre and vaudeville entertainment in our country today is that which

has set its policy as presenting two performances a day, one in the afternoon, and one at night. The B. F. Keith Circuit of Vaudeville Theatres exemplify this policy, in the east, and the Orpheum Circuit in the west. Within the last year, however, the Shuberts have inaugurated a "two-a-day" policy, making three "big-time" circuits in America.

There are many "small-time" circuits, whose house policy calls for three, four, and even five (generally only on Sundays and holidays) shows daily. Chiefly, these are: Keith (Family Department), Orpheum Junior, Shubert (Family Department), Pantages, Loew, Fox, Amalgamated, Sun, and Levy Circuits.

As long as the "big-timer" keeps injecting new songs and material into his act, and in every way keeping up the standard set for him by his competitors, just so long does he remain on the "big time." As soon as he grows careless and less diligent in the eternal struggle for new ideas and surprises, then does he gravitate to the small time, and finally out of the game, to be succeeded by someone far keener in the search for novelty and fresher thoughts.

I have shown that the "small-timer" can hardly feel able to pay the big prices demanded by the recognized vaudeville writer. Here, then, is a most valuable field for the young writer who has been disappointed in his attempts at landing with the "popular" song publishers to try his luck. Only last week a young lady doing an act consisting of character "kid" songs bewailed the fact to me that it was almost impossible for her to get hold of the right kind of kid songs. Songs in which the lyrics deftly portrayed some ludicrous "kid" situation, with punchy catch-lines, good for laughs. I advised her that she should have no trouble in purchasing same, just to see what she would say. She flared up instantly, claiming that she would pay fifty dollars immediately for the lyrics alone of a good "closing" song for her act. By "closing" is meant the last song used in the act, and presumably the strongest and best number of the act. I promised to set about procuring one for her at that figure.

The late hit with vaudeville artists, and an ideal number as measured by vaudeville standards is the song, (or *was* the song, I should say, as it has slid out of sight already,) "The Ole Swimmin' Hole." Study the "patter" chorus augmenting the song proper, and you will see what I mean by writing songs with a vaudeville "kick." This "patter" never failed to tickle the most stolid audience and invariably sent the actor singing it off to a rousing "hand."

I have outlined herein the general needs of the vaudeville song market. In another article I will explain how to reach these artists and place your songs before them, what general lines to follow in writing songs, and other pointed facts that will prove of valuable assistance to the young song writer anxious to try his hand in this field.

THE SECRET OF LINCOLN'S STYLE

By E. Harving Lange.

On one occasion Abraham Lincoln was interviewed by a representative of the New York "Independent" as to the secret of his style. Calling Mr. Lincoln's attention to the fact that some of the great teachers of rhetoric were using his speeches as models, the reporter asked him where he got his unusual power of putting things. This is his reply:

"I have been putting the question you ask me to myself while you have been talking. I say this, that among my earliest recollections, I remember how when a mere child I used to get irritated when anybody talked to me in a way I could not understand. I don't think I ever got angry at anything else in my life. But that always disturbed my temper.

"I can remember going to my little bedroom, after hearing the neighbors talk of an evening with my father, and spending no small part of the night walking up and down, and trying to make out what was the meaning of their, to me, dark sayings. When I got on such a hunt after an idea, I could not sleep, though I often tried to; and when I thought I had it, I was not satisfied until I had repeated it over and over, until I had put it in language plain enough, as I thought, for any boy I knew to comprehend.

"This was a kind of passion with me, and it has stuck by me, for I am never easy now, when I am handling a thought, till I have bounded it north, south, east and west. Perhaps that accounts for the characteristic you observe in my speeches, though I never put the two things together before."

Courtesy Paramount Pictures.

It has been said that it takes the co-operation of 1000 persons to produce a photoplay. It also requires the co-operation of many people before the photoplay is ready to produce.

Here we have a conference with Sam Wood, director; Elinor Glyn, the famous writer; Theodore Kosloff, the dancer and actor, and Michael Kustoff, formerly staff captain in the Russian Imperial army. It is through such conferences that many great photoplays are developed.

SANCTUM TALKS

A series of articles on Short Story Writing, intended as a guide for those who want to know more about this interesting and profitable phase of the writing profession.

By James Knapp Reeve.
Founder and Former Editor of The Editor Magazine.

THE question of timeliness is always in the front of the mind of the hack writer. All of our numerous holidays and countless anniversaries afford constantly recurring opportunities for special articles whose subjects, and to a large extent the material for same, are ready to the hand of whoever is sufficiently wise. About these I will speak later.

Just now I would call attention to the manner in which an up-and-doing novelist has taken advantage of the factor of timelines to produce a work of some importance.

Ralph D. Paine is a hard-working "literary cuss." He has done pretty nearly everything in the writer's game, newspaper reporter and editor, magazine editor, special investigator, was in the Boxer mixup in China and found there material for a splendid group of stories, has been a sea rover, was with the American Naval forces in European waters during the Great War, has written books on all sorts of topics, and including novels has now some thirty volumes to his credit. In addition to this Mr. Paine is a member of the legislature of his State—Connecticut—and of the state board of education.

With all his activities Mr. Paine never gets very far away from his old newspaper instincts, and when last Autumn the "Praying Colonels" of Centre College, Kentucky, went up into the football "holy of holies" and defeated Harvard on her own ground, Mr. Paine saw the true significance of the incident and availed himself of it for fictional purposes.

As Mr. Paine does nothing by halves, he went down to Centre College and studied the men of the football team in their own environment. Into the story he wove many true incidents, and made one of the really big football stories.

This was merely grasping, with both hands, a feature of timeliness. Probably five years from now Paine might have written just as good a football story as this, but five years from now he probably would not have been able to tie up with an occurrence that had captured the public mind—and front page of the newspapers. The fact that the football team of a little inland college could—and did—defeat Harvard, was in itself dramatic and stirred the popular imagination, and paved the way for exactly the book that Mr. Paine has given us.

It is not always that the time and the thing will thus serve the purposes of the writer. But this question of timeliness is one that the general writer never should neglect. We have a long and constantly growing list of holidays, running all the way from Christmas to Armistice Day (the last addition) and about all of these there constantly is something new to say or something old to say in a new way. As these holidays approach editors bestir themselves to find something attractive—and as nearly original as may be—to show that they have not forgotten "The day we celebrate."

Industrious writers, to gather this material, search encyclopedias, read history and biography, gather up half forgotten stories and endeavor to infuse into it all something of the spirit of the day and the time.

Not less important than the ability to gather this material and to put same into proper form, is the knowledge as to when it should be offered for publication. Last November a writer sent me a most charming Christmas story. There was no doubt in my mind but that it would meet the needs of some leading monthly publication. My correspondent was somewhat surprised when I advised her to put the story aside until after the first of January and then send it out; but this was done and the manuscript soon accepted by a most excellent magazine.

The reason for this advice was that the large monthly magazines are usually made up and the material sent to the printer some

two months before the publications appear on the newsstands. But the material itself is often selected anywhere from four months to a year prior to publication. An editor who is intent upon issuing a fine Christmas number is not going to wait for his leading story until he is ready to go to press, for then he might miss it entirely.

In submitting work for special holidays such as Christmas, New Year's Day, Easter, Decoration Day, St. Valentine's Day, St. Patrick's Day, Fourth of July, Columbus Day, Armistice Day, Labor Day, you are not on the safe side with a monthly publication unless you are four months ahead of the date of issue. How much further ahead you may be is optional, but it has been pretty truly said that the best time to send out Christmas and New Year's stuff is immediately after the first of January. This may be drawing it a bit strong, but "preparedness" is a good watchword.

Aside from the holidays to which I have referred we have an endless procession of anniversaries: there are such birthdays as Washington's, Lincoln's, and Grant's; days of national calamity such as the assassination of Lincoln and of McKinley; the recurrence of the anniversary of great events such as the sinking of the Lusitania, the Fall of the Alamo, Schley's victory at Santiago, Perry's victory, the great Chicago fire.

The list for timely articles could be enlarged almost without end. American readers are interested in the events that have been of importance to other peoples: such as the Gun Powder Plot of England, the Dramatic events of the French Revolution, Chinese and Jewish feast days with their peculiar customs and practices.

In regard to submitting such material well in advance, a writer must bear in mind that no matter how good his work is, it may not be accepted at "the first intention." An editor may be already supplied, or he may not want just that sort of thing, so one must give himself time to make at least a moderate round of editorial offices.

The possibilities before the writer in work of this sort — and the reader will readily see that it is a sort which may furnish occupation the year round—are so great that I sometimes wonder why the majority of writers are so intent upon producing fiction, and give so little attention to these matters that are ready to their hand. It is true that fiction offers the joys of creative work to a much greater extent, but most beginning writers are intent upon producing some output which will pretty surely bring a moderate and assured cash return within a reasonable time. In these respects such work—hack work though it may be—offers a better field than any other line. Not only are the magazines open for such articles, but to these may be added practically every newspaper in the land. Writers might do well to send their offerings to the papers of the larger cities of their own locality before going out into the broader field of the Metropolitan dailies, for these, of course, have at their command their own staff writers, fully equipped to turn out the desired material on short notice.

WINS EDISON PRIZE

Thomas A. Edison, Inc., Orange, N. J., announces that the first prize in its recent slogan competition has been awarded to Henry G. Lawrence, of Webster Grove, Mo. The prize is $5,000, and was won with the following slogan: "A Fireside Encore of the Artist." The second prize of $2,000 went to Edward A. Knoll, for "Artists Responding to the Encores of Home," and the third prize of $1,000 to William J. Palmer, for "All the Artist Gives, the Home Receives."

WORLD'S HISTORY HAS BEEN WRITTEN IN LOVE STORIES

"History records as the rulers of the world Alexander, Cæsar, Napoleon; but the truth of the matter is that women, not men have always ruled the world. Behind every ruler there has been some woman who was the secret domineering power of his throne. For Cæsar there was Cleopatra; for Napoleon there was Josephine; for King Louis XVI there was DuBarry; but the greatest of all womanly influences was that of Theodora, wife of the Emperor of the Roman Empire, whose will was law, and who finally destroyed the kingdom of the Cæsars to satisfy a love-mad whim."

ACTIVE CLUB IN INDIANAPOLIS

Indianapolis now boasts of an extremely active Writers' Club. The membership of this organization is quite extensive, and includes many writers well known to the public. The club meetings are so arranged as to have both an educational and a social value.

"FROM SHOPKEEPER TO SCENARIO WRITER"

A Partial Recounting of the Adventures and Misadventures of Julian Josephson, Esq.

HORATIO ALGER never wrote a more striking story of hard-won success than Julian Josephson has acted in real life. Six years ago Mr. Josephson was running a general store in the little town of Roseburg, Ore. Today he is associate scenario editor at the Goldwyn studios. The intervening years have been crowded with more experiences and hardships and disappointments than many persons manage to squeeze into a life-time.

The story begins with the failure of Mr. Josephson's little store in Roseburg, in which he lost his last cent. After a period, all too long, during which the importance of dining was forced home rather unpleasantly, he was offered a position as secretary of the Merchants' Association, at the stupendous salary of $30 a month. At the same time he was notary public, and through these two offices, and a few odd jobs he managed to dig up, he increased his income to about $65.

Photo by Clarence S. Bull.
JULIAN JOSEPHSON

What he lacked in cash, he possessed in spare time, and this leisure he devoted to the writing of four detective stories, which he sent to one of the big popular magazines and sold for a lump sum of $400. This seemed like a small fortune, though now the author is of the opinion his stories were bought by the pound, as they were all quite long.

Between the time the stories were submitted and the time they were bought, Mr. Josephson had gone to San Francisco in the hope of finding work. But upon selling them he was sure that he had at last struck the trail that leads to the end of the rainbow, and spent his time writing more.

But when his pile of rejection slips had grown, and his cash on hand had shrunk to distressing proportions, the author was forced to look for another job. The opening of the San Francisco Exposition proved a life-saver, for there he picked up a job as a ticket-taker. In this capacity he had to wear a blue coat with brass buttons, but he regarded that as one of the kind acts of Providence, for it made the buying of new clothes, or rather, the wearing of ragged ones, unnecessary. For thirteen months he listened to the click of the turnstile and gathered in the tickets of tourists. Then the Exposition closed and he was out of work again.

He next officiated as salesman in a bargain basement, into which penetrated little light and less English. This period he thinks of now as an uninterrupted succession of bargain rushes, in which the salesman always got the worst of it. One day the greatest bargain sale in the history of the store was staged—and this was the straw that broke the camel's back.

With about as much money in his pocket as a head waiter expects for a tip, Mr. Josephson threw over his job and set out for Los Angeles. He had determined to buck the movie game.

Arrived in the City of the Angels he began immediately to besiege the offices of the scenario editors. But after weeks of vain encounters with office boys and occasional glimpses of editorial assistants he was forced to the conclusion that he was missing too many meals. So he hit upon the scheme of working half a day in a shoe store and spending the other

half looking for work at the studios and in writing scenarios.

It may have been perseverance, or luck, or a kind-hearted editor, or a combination of all three. At any rate, the great day finally came. He landed a staff job at a flat salary of $25 a week. And from that time his rise, as they say, has been steady.

Mr. Josephson won his first spurs writing original stories for Charles Ray. Do you remember "The Hired Man," "Paris Green," "String Beans," "Greased Lightning," "Crooked Straight" and "The Egg Crate Wallop"? Julian Josephson wrote them all.

In his new position as associate editor for Goldwyn, Josephson is working under that veteran scenario writer editor, J. G. Hawks, who early saw in him the makings of a worth-while contributor to the newest of the arts.

All of Mr. Josephson's writings show that simple, truthful touch which characterizes most great literature. Nearly all of his stories have dealt with plain folk in small towns. He has been collaborating with Anzia Yezierska, one of the newest figures in American letters, on the screen version of her story, "Hungry Hearts," in which the author has tried to interpret to America the soul of the American immigrant. The combination of two such writers is expected to result in a remarkable photoplay.

WRITE ABOUT WHAT YOU KNOW

By Julian Josephson
(Goldwyn Staff Writer.)

WRITE about things that have come within the range of your own experience and observation. Too often the writer, who is just beginning, writes about people and places with which he is utterly unfamiliar. In that case his stories are almost certain to lack that reality and fineness of detail that make a story live and breathe on the written page.

When I first started to write, I lived in a little inland town and didn't know a marlinspike from a mizzenmast. Therefore, I chose the rolling deep as the locale of my tales. Needless to say, these were sadly lacking in the salty flavor required in sea stories by editors, and my manuscripts came rolling back to me with unfailing regularity.

It never occurred to me to write about things with which I was familiar—with things that existed close at hand in my own little town. In fact, I wrote about almost every kind of place and people except my own home town and the folks in it. I could not see how any editor could be interested in small-town happenings or people.

Then, after I had exhausted about all the unfamiliar people and places, without success, I looked, though dubiously, to my own surroundings for story material. In what I then considered a moment of madness, I wrote a story of small-town life, based on happenings in my own little town, and thought I had done a foolish thing. When I mailed it to a scenario editor, I felt as if I should have sent an apology with it. To my surprise the story was purchased, and the editor asked me to submit others with a similar small-town atmosphere.

Since then I have confined myself almost entirely to small-town stories—and with success. Now, this doesn't mean that everybody should write small-town stories, but it does mean that everybody should write about things that have come within the range of his actual experience or observation. Then, and then only, will they have the stamp of reality; the sincerity, and truth and warmth that will make them live and breathe—and sell.

MOTHER GOOSE FOR THE POET

By James Clyde Bailey.

There was a man in our town
Wrote lyrics blithe and gay;
He placed the best in envelopes
And send them on their way.
They had a way of coming back;
But now—for he's begun
To sing the simple joys of life—
He sells them every one.

SYNDICATING TO THE SUNDAY SUPPLEMENTS

A series of articles taking up every phase of securing, writing, and marketing stories for the Sunday Newspaper Supplement—a most interesting and profitable phase of the writing profession—and one that offers unlimited opportunity.

By Felix J. Koch

Contributor to the Leading Papers of the Country.

PREPARING THE COPIES OF THE ARTICLE TO BE SYNDICATED

EDITORS, it becomes evident, are anxious to secure the best material obtainable for their respective papers.

But, there is a very great deal of the BEST being offered those same editors in every mail.

In order that you or I should strike the busy editor more forcibly with our work, than any or all of those others do, it is essential that we resort to some very fundamental psychology:

Man, different from all other living things, will go out of his way for the neat, the pleasing, the attractive.

Man may be a worker—a fiend for this—but he rebels at unnecessary work—work he knows he can avoid.

As a result, an attractive, inviting, neatly addressed envelope in that budget, that super-bundle of mail, will catch his eye, stir some responsive chord somewhere in his soul, and cause him to reach for the container, open it, and read what has been sent inside, often a long time before the stated envelope would have been reached in its rote. The sooner this man comes to your offering, the less fagged and weary his brain must be—the less is his surfeit at unsolicited material, the greater the chance of sale.

What is more, the sooner he reaches the manuscript you have sent, the less of the other material has been tentatively accepted from the lot, and so the more space in the paper still open to him, for which he will buy.

Most professional syndicate writers spend long hours on the matter of the envelope in which they send their wares. They know the value of novelty here as well, and so, each time a lot of the envelopes has been consumed, they change to other colors and styles in the edition to come.

The writer folk know the value of a luring envelope, one leading an editor, just starting on his morning mail, to take it up and open it, far out of its proper rote.

They know, better still, the supreme value of making, just as inviting as they know how, the manuscript they send inside the container.

The work of preparing this manuscript, so that it shall go forth in such shape begins with the other extreme end of the tale.

Manuscript, in order to be even glanced at, must be typewritten.

The letters employed must be PRINT, and not script, as some beginners fail to know.

If the beginner to the syndicate writer's craft has no typewriter as yet, it will pay him to invest in, or rent, one of the more standard makes. Editors know the product of such machines on sight; they know about how many words their type implies to a page; they know that, should a writer have tolled the words for them, and they cut paragraphs here and there from out of the mass, approximately what is left.

Continuing with Cincinnati, as being typical of the American communities, we find that at the writing one of the large standard typewriter concerns will rent good, workable machines at five dollars a month, or twelve dollars for the quarter, (three months).

Naturally, the person who intends to make a livelihood of the work will prefer to invest in a machine of his own.

Many persons have found it very satisfactory, pending larger surplus of funds, to purchase an "old model," or second-hand machine, but of the typewriter concern whose name the machine bears *itself*. "Old models" are often simply machines which

failed to sell during the year when they were new; they are every bit as good as the new machines, except that they do not possess the very latest improvements to be found on those new machines—and most of which a syndicate writer, caring little for "columning" and such things, would never employ.

Second-hand machines are not necessarily old, battered, worn-out machines. It often happens that certain concerns find the latest model of a machine to possess exactly the one improvement they have long been seeking; sometimes one they, themselves, along with many other patrons, wrote the concern to bring about. They buy the new machine—but, there is a limit to their funds, too, and there is the old machine left on their hands, with no use for two typewriters at the place. So, as a business-builder, or to promote introducing the new, or, as a courtesy to a good customer, the typewriter people "take in" the old instrument, allow for it, and, ship-shape though it is, they sell it as a second-hand machine.

One big concern in Cincinnati, whose price for new machines ranges to $102.50 for the latest model—the No. X-A—will sell you a guaranteed model for seventy-five dollars, on very liberal terms.

The new machine—the TEN-A—they call it, costs $102.50 if paid for outright. Instead of doing this, though, most beginners prefer to have the purchase price increased by five dollars; pay twenty-five or thirty dollars down, and the rest at the rate of ten dollars a month.

With the typewriter, one receives his first ribbon. There are many colors from which to pick, but black ink is what editors are used to; any other color brands the man employing it as eccentric, and somehow causes an editor to rebel at the start—there are limits to what we prefer with our departures from the usual. Some few men use a red-and-black ribbon, employing the red ink section where they italicize. Even that, though, gives a slightly childlike appearance to a page. It antagonizes many editors. Besides, one doesn't use up the red edge of the ribbon nearly as fast as the black, and so, needing a new black band in time, the better part of that red half of the ribbon will be wasted.

Good, strong black typewriter ribbon sells at a dollar a spool today. Professionals invest in so-called coupon-books, paid for in advance and giving them six coupons for $4.60.

So much for the typewriter.

By and by a metal case for the same, with shelves for paper, carbon, things of the sort, may be discussed; but the beginner is apt to be content, at this time, to slip the machine, with the black rubberoid cover that comes with it, onto the office-closet shelf, for the time.

When using the instrument, in default of the typewriter-stand suggested, which has its two sides dropping to form shelves for paper to be copied from, an ordinary household sewing-table — a lapboard, with legs folding up under it—will be found to answer all purposes required.

Tables of the sort—18 x 36 inches—may be had, ordered over the telephone and delivered to the door, in Cincinnati, at $3.50.

The machine at the center of this, the notes or other material to be worked from at one's left, the finished pages on the right, with some simple paper-weight from the nearest ten-cent store to hold these from flying in the breeze, the box of paper at far left or far right, as may be convenient, and work may progress merrily, indeed.

For the warm months, when windows are open and the breezes blow, a cheap slab of glass, cut at the nearest paint-store to a size a trifle larger than the paper you are using—say nine by twelve inches, therefore—is exceedingly valuable when copying is to be done. Often, that is to say, all but one or two sentences suit an author, on completing a page of manuscripts; he stops therefore to copy over and re-work, from the newly-finished page. He wants it open before him, fully; he doesn't want the wind to turn up the edges; so he lays, flat on this copy, the simple plate of glass.

One can get a pane of this sort, a quarter of an inch thick, and nine by twelve inches otherwise, at the glass company, for as little as thirty-five cents. A plate, with fair care, lasts a life-time.

Typewriter ready for use, notes or other material to be worked from beneath this glass at the left, the writer is ready to "feed" his paper and write.

Only, remember, he is syndicating. He is going to send out many copies. What number he will send depends upon him. Many of the higher-grade writers rest content with twelve copies. Not all of those twelve copies will sell each place where

sent! They return, and are sent elsewhere and perhaps a third place. As a result, twelve copies may mean bringing the article to the attention of twenty-four, thirty, sometimes more clients.

Besides, each copy will need its set of pictures. Prints cost a man money. Twelve copies, each with at least five pictures, mean sixty prints in all. The cheapest one can get dependable prints, a credit to the man sending out syndicate work, is a nickel the picture. This means three dollars just for pictures. Some men believe *that* a sufficient investment for any one article they write, so far as pictures are concerned.

The man is syndicating; he wants to send out many copies. But, he wants each copy to reach his client neat, inviting, what is known as "clean."

Here we know we invite a contest royal with the typewriter people. Perhaps they are right and we are wrong. It has been our experience, however, that the best kind of work of this sort comes by making not to exceed four copies—one original and three carbons—at a sitting. Even with the best of carbon paper, each sheet brand new to start, the bottommost page is apt to have its letters spread and to look as stenographers are wont to say "messy" and "smeary."

It has been our experience, to go on with it, that the best dozen copies for syndicate work, are obtained by writing the first quartette ourselves; composing the article as we go, that is to say; finishing it, and drawing from the typewriter the original and its three carbons.

These originals, or any one of them, we turn over, then, to the stenographer to copy; she, very obviously, omitting any errors of typewriting which she may discover.

Copying thus, she makes an original and three carbons.

From these more correct copies, she makes an original and three more carbons.

It isn't very long before we have twelve neat, inviting manuscripts, ready for the post.

Composing directly onto four sheets of paper somehow tends to make a man careful; he doesn't make the slips of the fingers he will when composing on an individual sheet. Perhaps this comes from an old race-inheritance—the need of fighting super-waste; the taking care of the basic supply, that the owner might survive.

Composing thus, with the material well in mind, and the notes to be used in good shape at the side, a professional thinks nothing of composing a page, end to end, in twelve to fifteen minutes.

Copying from that page, eight and a half inches by eleven, but double-spaced and so with about thirty lines in all, or say three-hundred words to the page, a trained stenographer will make the copy of such a page for the companion copies of the article in considerably less time. It is no trick at all to copy a page of the standard size in eight to, at very most, ten minutes, and where material is not complicated, and the eye reads while you write, in probably as little as seven.

Whether one makes just four copies at a sitting; whether one makes as many copies as the machine and the paper and the carbon paper used will give impressions of at a writing, rests with the individual, of course. We have discussed the subjects with experts, and using a paper of good, fair body—the sort editors seem to like—we find, to repeat, that four, then four more, articles—and still more quartettes should we desire—produce the best results.

The matter of paper to be used is vitally important, viewed over the business of a year.

The thicker the paper, the harder for the typewriter keys to force impressions through it. The harder this task for them, the less perfect the eventual carbon copies. So you get as thin a paper, for the moment, as you dare.

The articles sent out are, unfortunately, not always sold to the first person shown them. Many reasons aside from excellence are responsible for this. It may occur that an editor has already printed something on the identical subject—great minds think alike, you know. It may be he dislikes the subject; or that he takes a wholly different view of it from yours. He returns the article, but he isn't over-careful with it. If it doesn't return to its first creases as it should, if it buckles and bends, he sends it back that way. Then you must have it re-copied before you dare send it elsewhere, meaning typist expense and delay.

So you want a paper as thick as you can get it to permit of ready handling; as thin as possible, with the other end in view, to "take" carbon, and kill weight. Weight means postage, and postage must be enclosed for return, as well as sending out.

We have long found a bond paper known to the paper houses as NUMBER 0—woven

for from six to eight copies, most satisfactory. We buy it in an eight and a half by eleven-inch size; it costs us $1.65 for a box of five-hundred sheets.

White paper, and white paper alone, is recommended.

Glossy paper is taboo; it smears beneath typing and the revising editor's ink.

The paper, as stated, is cut to letterhead size—eight and a half by eleven inches.

This permits of folding in three. That gives a convenient budget for the legal envelope. It produces a neat manuscript for the man at the other end of the journey to handle. With the proper margin at the top and the bottom and at either side—say half an inch on all but the left side, of these; and perhaps an inch, for any insertions in the companion line there, a page this size will hold about three hundred words, as has already been said.

Folded in three, each section contains a hundred words, of course. Half a section implies roughly fifty words.

It becomes very easy, thus, to estimate the number of words in a script, when this is desired, without ever stopping to count.

Carbon paper is another interesting subject for consideration.

We know of reputable concerns who state that one can get sixty copies from one sheet of their superior carbon. One *can*—on an onion-skin paper—or "flimsy" the telegraph editors call it—and if one doesn't care if O's and R's and B's and P's have their ovals filled, or how things look generally. There is a good carbon paper put out by one concern, which sells at two dollars for a box of a hundred sheets. You can get six, and sometimes seven, pages from a sheet. We dislike trying more. Carbon paper is cheaper than "doing" a page, only to find one must do it over, because the carbon was smeary and messy.

Wherefore, paper, carbon; paper, carbon; so on, in the machine—the notes convenient beneath the glass; the box of paper to be used as one goes on convenient to the reach, at hand; a long hatpin—a nickel it costs anywhere—convenient for picking any clogging material from the letters, should such chance to show itself as you go, and you should be ready to write.

Just one little suggestion before leaving this subject of the mechanics of the typewritten syndicate article:

Where possible, concentrate your purchases of supplies with one concern. Buy your typewriter, your typewriter oil, shortly; your ribbons, your paper, your carbons, from one house.

Doing so, when you have trouble from any one item of the many, there can be no shifting the blame. The typewriter house can't tell you that the paper is poor—hence poor impressions; the "paper house" that your instrument is of no account. So with the other items involved.

WHAT HAPPENS TO YOUR SCENARIO?

By Frank Lyle.

HOW does one sell a scenario? After an exhaustive study of the routine through which twelve thousand scenarios and "alleged scenarios" pass through the Lasky editorial offices in Hollywood, California, every year, the answer seems to be chiefly that one doesn't.

Since the Lasky company transferred its main offices to New York, where most of the scenarios are passed upon, the number of "brain children" which the Hollywood postman delivers each year to the Lasky studios has been decreased to the trifling number of 12,000. Of these, 11,900 go no farther than the office of Miss Frances Harmer, the chief reader.

It is a neat, tiny little room, this execution chamber of hopes. Miss Harmer, a gentle, white-haired little lady who has been for twenty years a reader for publishing houses and who knows every plot which writers have written since the time of Euripides, sits at a small desk, busily skimming through manuscripts all day long and typing reports on them. Filing cabinets all around the walls are filled with these reports, and every day a loose-leaf book, with her day's work listed, goes to the Supervising Director, Frank E. Woods.

Name of scenario, address of its author, and date, are recorded in this book. And after each something like this: "Returned to author. Baby shoe." "Returned to authors. Stolen invention plot." "Returned to author. Wife shoots drunken bully husband. Flees, becomes nurse, wounded husband brought in, nurses him, reconciliation." "Returned to author. Stolen code again." "Returned to author. Locket."

"Great goodness, do you ever buy one?" I said to Miss Harmer.

(*Continued on page 38.*)

WHEN YOU WRITE FOR THE SCREEN

By Jeannie Macpherson.

(Special scenario writer for Cecil B. DeMille Productions.)

THE motion picture is the universal entertainment. It appeals to all ages, classes and both sexes.

Remember that fact in writing for the screen.

Universality of appeal is the quality which every screen story must have. It must, in theory at least, hold out the promise of entertainment and a genuine thought for every individual who is a potential spectator.

The screen writer plays to an audience unheard of before the advent of the motion picture. Where the stage playwright or the novelist reaches hundreds of thousands at the most the photoplay reaches millions. Approximately nine million people see motion pictures every day in the United States alone. And the United States is but a small part of the potential audience on any one picture.

Keep those facts in mind in writing scenarios. It is a fact never forgotten by the professional writer. The latter reckons that a thought worthy of screen production must reach all the world or it is but a partial success. That's why the professional writer selects the theme with extreme care and elaborates it with even more attention to the details.

Stories—the product of untrained writers—reach my desk every day, that have been written without this fundamental fact in mind. By the very selection of their subject the writers automatically exclude a large proportion of their potential audience. Here a story attacks the negro problem in a manner offensive to the South; another attempts to deal with the subject of organized labor in a way that would offend every member of a labor union.

Other writers make the mistake of writing about subjects which are beyond the understanding of the average spectator. I do not mean that these stories are too good for the public, on the contrary, they are not nearly good enough. And one of the reasons that they are not good enough for production is the fact that they are of such a restricted appeal. They require specialized knowledge which all the world does not possess. Thereby they automatically cut off a large portion of the public from the enjoyment of that picture.

The ideal screen story might be said to be one which would appeal to the college professor and the ditch digger equally; to the society woman and servant girl.

To achieve such an ideal is a task that is monumental in itself. But to even approximate such an ideal it is necessary that every effort be made to select a theme with the widest possible note of appeal. Don't antagonize the college professor or the ditch digger, the society woman or the servant girl by the very subject matter of your story.

The truly great screen plays have been built around stories with that note of universal appeal. Great acting, perfect direction, excellent photography and scenic work all play their part. But if the story lacks the universal note, the other qualities are sheer waste.

One frequently hears the plea that "the story was too good for the public." The implication is that the story or the finished picture went over the heads of the audience.

This is absolute nonsense. There is no such thing as a picture that is "too good for the public." The reason pictures fail is because they are not good enough for the public. That same public is the hardest critic in the world. It refuses to be fooled. Advertising and publicity cannot make it like that which is unworthy of it.

The real reason for each and every failure in the world of drama is that the play is faulty. No other reason really counts. And in the world of the photoplay one of the surest ways to fall short of the mark set by the public is to write for a restricted audience.

Insofar as possible avoid the type of subject matter that goes beyond the understanding of the average individual. Not all of us are captured by Arab raiders in the Sahara desert. But we can all understand being captured and we can feel vicariously the emotions of the captive.

It has been my experience that the most successful photoplays have been written around every day matters. Problems of married life offer a subject for the scenario writer that, while it is exceedingly dangerous to work with, meets with the widest possible sympathy and understanding from the public. That's because all of us have a thorough working knowledge of marriage. We may not all be married, but we have friends, relatives and acquaintances who are. And we can see in the picture psychology and emotional reactions with which we are all familiar.

That doesn't mean that matrimonial problem plays are the only ones that the public approves of nor does it mean that every amateur writer should immediately turn his or her attention to a story on this subject. It merely illustrates the point of universality which is the basis of every successful screen story.

VERSE PATTERNS IN ENGLISH POETRY

By Robert Lee Straus, M. A.

Instructor in the University of Cincinnati.

(Continued from March issue.)

THE eleven-line stanza is rarely used. An example occurs in Keats' *Ode to Autumn,* rhyming *a b a b c d e c d d e :*

Where are the songs of Spring? Ay, where are they?
Think not of them, thou hast thy music, too,
While barred clouds bloom the soft-dying day,
And touch the stubble-plains with rosy hue;
Then in a wailful choir, the small gnats mourn
Among the river sallows, borne aloft
Or sinking as the light wind lives or dies;
And full-grown lambs loud bleat from hilly bourn:
Hedge-crickets sing; and now with treble soft
The redbreast whistles from a garden-croft,
And gathering swallows twitter in the skies.

Browning has used the stanza of eleven lines with fine effect in *The Last Ride Together,* rhymed *a a b b c d d e e e c :*

And yet—she has not spoke so long!
What if heaven be that, fair and strong
At life's best, with our eyes upturned
Whither life's flower is first discerned,
We, fixed so, ever should so abide?
What if we still ride on, we two,
With life forever old yet new,
Changed not in kind but in degree,
The instant made eternity,—
And heaven just prove that I and she
Ride, ride together, forever ride?

The twelve-line stanza, because of its even number of verses, permits a more symmetrical arrangement than is possible with the stanza of eleven lines. It is therefore more frequently found. Notable examples follow:

The clouds are broken in the sky,
and through the mountain walls
A rolling organ-harmony
Swells up and shakes and falls.
Then move the trees, the copses nod,
Wings flutter, voices hover clear:
"O just and faithful knight of God!
Ride on! the prize is near."
So pass I hostel, hall, and grange;
By bridge and ford, by park and pale,
All-arm'd I ride, whate'er betide,
Until I find the Holy Grail.

—Tennyson, *Sir Galahad.*

I bring fresh showers for the thirsting flowers,
From the seas and the streams;
I bear light shade for the leaves when laid
In their noonday dreams.
From my wings are shaken the dews that waken
The sweet buds every one,
When rocked to rest on their mother's breast,
As she dances about the sun.
I wield the flail of the lashing hail,
And whiten the green plains under,
And then again I dissolve it in rain,
And laugh as I pass in thunder.

—Shelley, *The Cloud.*

The thirteen-line stanza is seldom found. No famous poem has been written in this form, although Thomas Moore has used it admirably in *Lesbia Hath a Beaming Eye:*

Lesbia hath a beaming eye,
But no one knows for whom it beameth;
Right and left its arrows fly,
But what they aim at no one dreameth.
Sweeter 'tis to gaze upon
My Nora's lid that seldom rises;
Few its looks, but every one,
Like unexpected light, surprises!
Oh, my Nora Creina, dear,
My gentle, bashful Nora Creina,
Beauty lies
In many eyes,
But love in yours, my Nora Creina.

The fourteen-line stanza, with the exception of the sonnet which is usually treated as a poem in itself, is infrequently employed. Herrick's *Corinna's Going a-Maying* alternates couplet and couplet quatrain:

—Come, let us go, while we are in our prime;
And take the harmless folly of the time!
We shall grow old apace, and die
Before we know our liberty.
Our life is short; and our days run
As fast away as does the sun:—
And as a vapour, or a drop of rain
Once lost, can ne'er be found again:
So when or you or I are made
A fable, song, or fleeting shade;
All love, all liking, all delight
Lies drown'd with us in endless night.
—Then while time serves, and we are but decaying,
Come, my Corinna! come, let's go a-Maying.

Moore's Oft in the Silly Night is composed of quatrains preceding and following a sextain:

Oft, in the stilly night,
Ere Slumber's chain has bound me,
Fond memory brings the light
Of other days around me;
The smiles, the tears,
Of boyhood's years,
The words of love then spoken;
The eyes that shone
Now dimm'd and gone,
The cheerful hearts now broken!
Thus, in the stilly night,
Ere Slumber's chain has bound me,
Sad memory brings the light
Of other days around me.

The fifteen-line stanza occurs in Scott's *Marmion:*

Blackford! on whose uncultured breast,
Among the broom, and thorn, and whin,
A truant-boy, I sought the nest,
Or listed, as I lay at rest,
While rose on breezes thin,
The murmur of the city crowd,
And, from his steeple jangling loud,
Saint Giles' mingling din.
Now, from the summit of the plain,
Waves all the hill with yellow grain;
And o'er the landscape as I look,
Nought do I see unchanged remain,
Save the rude cliffs and chiming brook.
To me they make a heavy moan,
Of early friendships past and gone.

The sixteen-line stanza is found in Meredith's *Modern Love:*

In our old shiprecked days there was an hour
When, in the firelight steadily aglow,
Joined slackly, we beheld the red chasm grow
Among the clicking coals. Our library-bower
That eve was left to us; and hushed we sat
As lovers to whom Time is whispering.
From sudden-opened doors we heard them sing:
The nodding elders mixed good wine with chat.
Well knew we that Life's greatest treasure lay
With us, and of it was our talk. "Ah, yes!
Love dies!" I said: I never thought it less.
She yearned to me that sentence to unsay.
Then when the fire domed blackening, I found
Her cheek was salt against my kiss, and swift
Up the sharp scale of sobs her breast did lift:—
Now am I haunted by that taste! that sound!

can do that. It's push, man, push—genius

The seventeen-line stanza appears in Collins' *Ode on the Popular Superstitions of the Highlands of Scotland:*

For him in vain his anxious wife shall wait,
Or wander forth to meet him on his way;
For him in vain at to-fall of the day,
His babes shall linger at the unclosing gate.
Ah, ne'er shall he return! Alone, if night
Her traveled limbs in broken slumbers steep,
With drooping willows drest, his mournful sprite
Shall visit sad, perchance, her silent sleep:
Then he, perhaps, with moist and watery hand,
Shall fondly seem to press her shuddering cheek,
And with his blue-swollen face before her stand,
And, shivering cold, these piteous accents speak:
"Pursue, dear wife, thy daily toils pursue,
At dawn or dusk, industrious as before;
Nor e'er of me one helpless thought renew,
While I lie weltering on the osiered shore,
Drown'd by the kelpies' wrath, nor e'er shall aid
thee more!"

Spencer's bridal songs *Prothalamion* and *Epithalamion* contain stanzas of seventeen, eighteen, and nineteen lines:

There, in a meadow, by the river's side,
A flocke of nymphes I chaunced to espy,
All lovely daughters of the flood thereby,
With goodly greenish locks all loose untyde,
As each had bene a bride:
And each one had a little wicker basket,
Made of fine twigs entrayled curiously,
In which they gathered flowers to fill their flasket;
And with fine fingers cropt full feateously
The tender stalkes on hye.
Of every sort, which in that meadow grew,
They gathered some; the violet pallid blew,
The little dazie, that at evening closes,
The virgin lillie, and the primrose trew,
With store of vermeil roses,
To decke their bridegromes posies
Against the brydale day, which was not long:
Sweete Themmes, runne softly, till I end my song.
Prothalamion.

But stanzaic patterns of more than fourteen lines can scarcely be said to yield a unified impression. Such "mazily murmuring" forms give the effect of continuous verse, and no longer present that sense of compactness and unity which characterizes the best stanzaic structures in our poetry.

REFRAIN STANZAS.

Many interesting musical effects have been obtained in our poetry by means of the refrain idea. This refrain may serve as a mere increment or coda to the stanza:

But ah! by constant heed I know,
How oft the sadness that I show

Transforms thy smiles to looks of woe,
My Mary!
And should my future lot be cast
With much resemblance of the past
Thy worn-out heart will break at last,
My Mary!
—Cowper, *To Mary.*

I wish I were where Helen lies;
Night and day on me she cries;
O that I were where Helen lies
On fair Kirconnell lea!
Fair Helen; old ballad.

The refrain may be made also an integral part of the stanzaic structure by means of rhyme:

Yea, to Love himself is pour'd
This frail song of hope and fear.
Thou art Love, of one accord
With kind Sleep to bring her near,
Still-eyed, deep-eyed, ah, how dear!
Master, Lord,
In her name implor'd, O hear!
Rossetti, *Love's Nocturn.*

Growing out of the refrain stanza we have the *tail-rhyme* stanza, characterized by two short lines rhyming together and serving as "tails" to the two divisions of the body of the stanza, thus:

The mossy marbles rest
On the lips that he has press'd
In their bloom;
And the names he loved to hear
Have been carved for many a year
On the tomb.
—Holmes, *The Last Leaf.*

Various devices for securing variety in the tail-rhyme stanza follow.

(a) The couplet division of the stanza may be expanded into a triplet or a quatrain:

I am a man of war and might,
And know thus much, that I can fight,
Whether I am i' th' wrong or right,
Devoutly.
No woman under heaven I fear,
New oaths I can exactly swear,
And forty healths my brains will bear
Most stoutly.
—Sir John Suckling, *A Soldier.*

By the mighty minister's bell,
Tolling with a sudden swell;
By the colours half-mast high,
O'er the seas hung mournfully;
Know, a prince hath died!
By the drum's dull muffled sound,
By the arms that sweep the ground,
By the volleying muskets' tone,
Speak ye of a soldier gone
In his manhood's prime.
—Mrs. Hemans, *Last Rites.*

(b) The number of divisions may be increased:

Lenten ys come with love to toune,
With blosmen and with briddes roune;
That al this blisse bryngeth.
Dayes-eyes in this dales;
Notes swete of nyhtegales;
Uch foul song singeth.
The threstercoc him threteth oo;
Away is huere wynter woo,
When woderoue springeth.
This foules singeth ferly fele,
And weyteth on huere wynter wele,
That al the wode ryngeth.
Springtime (Middle English).

(c) The divisions may be dissimilar in the number of lines:

Is there a man whose judgment clear,
Can others teach the course to steer,
Yet runs, himself, life's mad career
Wild as the wave;
Here pause—and, thro' the starting tear,
Survey this grave.
—Burns, *A Bard's Epitaph.*

(d) The tail verses may be lengthened:

Spring it is cheery,
Winter is dreary,
Green leaves hang, but the brown must fly:
When he's forsaken,
Wither'd and shaken,
What can an old man do but die?
—Thomas Hood, *Ballad.*

(e) The tail verses may vary in length:

Let us not always say,
"Spite of this flesh today
I strove, made head, gained ground upon the whole!"
As the bird wings and sings,
Let us cry, "All good things
Are ours, nor soul helps flesh more, now, than flesh helps soul!"
—Browning, *Rabbi Ben Ezra.*

(f) The introduction of tail-rhyme effects into stanzas of varying line lengths often gives a delicate lyrical quality:

Ye dainty Nymphs, that in this blessed brook
Do bathe your breast,
Forsake your watery bowers, and hither look
At my request:
And eke you Virgins that on Parnasse dwell,
Whence floweth Helicon, the learned well,
Help me to blaze
Her worthy praise,
Which in her sex doth all excel.
—Spencer, *The Shepherd's Calendar.*

New Books

"Roosevelt in the Kansas City Star." (*Houghton, Mifflin Co.*)

"The Black Moth," by Georgette Heyer. (*Houghton, Mifflin Co.*)

"To Him That Hath," by Ralph Connor. (*Doran Company.*)

"Fishing From the Earliest Times," by William Radcliff. (*E. P. Dutton Co.*)

"The Stages of Human Life," by J. Lionel Taylor. (*E. P. Dutton Co.*)

THE NEWSWRITER'S CORNER

A Department for Those Interested in All Phases of Newspaper Work.

UTILIZING YOUR OPPORTUNITIES

By Ellen Hosmer Campbell.

"THERE'S not the least bit of a chance for a beginner anyhow, here I've tried and tried, and what do I get? Rejection slips and insults."

Oh, yes, we have all heard that complaint many times, and if patiently we ask: "Well, now, let's see just what is the trouble? What was your story about and where did you send it?"

Personally, I don't gamble or I would lay ten to one that the reply would come and somewhat after this fashion:

"Well, you see, I have written a perfectly darling story about a girl I knew at school and a perfectly killing love affair of hers. And I sent it to *The Saturday Evening Post,* and all they did was send me a printed slip."

"Oh, I see, this was your first story and it was about a school-girl love affair—and you sent it to *The Saturday Evening Post.* Um hum—well now I do see."

As for myself I believe absolutely in the power of a well-directed ambition, I believe that such an ambition will place one on the lists of the best magazines, if, and there comes the rub, that ambition is guided and developed by study and work and a willingness to use each step in the ladder as it is reached.

And that brings me to the gist of my remarks, for I started out to relate a little of the experience that I gained on a country newspaper. Oh yes, I know that you may turn up your nose at the thoughts of such lowly work and that you may say that there are no opportunities there for the story teller. Instead of an answer I'm going to relate some of my actual experiences and then allow you to value them as you may see fit.

My first experience in the writing game after successive contributions to the society column, was in conducting a Woman's Column, which was given the unique title of "Her Column." It in time became a record not only of daily happenings, but was devoted to life sketches of friends and acquaintances. In fact, it reflected the true characteristics of these, the laugh and sob equally distributed.

There was for instance the story of the charming society woman who was kidnapped in infancy by a nurse, because she could not bear the idea of consigning the infant to the mercies of a stepmother. The distracted father after a search of two years, traced his child to the northern pine woods, recovering her from the then repentant foster mother. Of course, this permitted of considerable embroidery on my part.

Again there was the tragic story of an ancester only two generations removed, who was executed for a murder he did not commit. This happened in a rural district of New York. The owner of many acres while strolling through his wood pasture, came across a peddler in the agonies of death. There was no trace of the murderer and soon suspicion began to point at the farmer. It was recalled that he was a man of violent temper and had driven the peddler off the premises on a previous call. On this circumstantial evidence he was tried and sentenced. Some years after his execution a returned sailor, dying in a city hospital confessed to the crime giving all the particulars, too late, however, to save the innocent man and his heart-broken wife, who soon followed her martyred husband to the grave.

A more cheerful story furnished by a popular matron told of crossing the alkali plains of Western Colorado, after a year's separation from her bridegroom, to join him in a mining camp, just over the Divide. He failed to meet her at the end of the stage line, as promised, but had provided for her reception at the home of a good woman who reassured the homesick girl of his early arrival next day. Accordingly

she was posted at a window in the morning, watching a trail, and soon saw what appeared to be a speck in the distance. As the object grew larger it materialized into a man leading a burro beside his own. Her husband's prediction when reunited, would the mule she rode to her new home, would be replaced by a coach and four, and the tent house by a brown-stone house, the hight of elegance in those days, was not exactly realized, but at the time the letter was written he was owner of a Kansas drug store.

Another leader in society had attended in early girlhood a college which had turned out a number of embryo celebrities, and her reminiscences of the school days of prominent pulpit orators, politicians, and diplomats, furnished lively chronicles for the pencil pusher. She had carried surrepticious notes from an eminent divine to his sweetheart who was forbidden communication with the impecunious theological student. She also had attended the wedding of a statesman at the country home of the bride, where everything was conducted in the most primitive manner, a sharp contrast to the banquets often given in the statesman's home. A diplomat who reached his supremacy by missionary ministrations in heathen lands was remembered as a little, freckle-faced, red-headed Irish urchin, who sat on the fence and pelted the little Lord Fauntleroys and Kate Greenaways on their way to Sunday school, with rocks. Being lured into the church by the music, he was converted and thus started on the right path to usefulness and honors.

The St. Louis Exposition was a rich field for the recorder. The experience of returned pilgrims, the couple who were fastened up in an subterranean cell, so-called chamber of the Inside Inn. Until their cries attracted the attention of the elusive bell boy, supposed to sit constantly at the end of the corridor to watch the semaphores. The maiden who tarrying with her affinity, a chair guide, was locked out of her room at the C. M. hotel by her room mate. After rousing the inmates of the house in her efforts to awaken the sleeper, she accomplished her purpose by throwing a slipper over the transom. It was easy to imagine the sleeping maiden as having a Cinderella fairy dream waking to find no Prince at hand to fit the slipper, but a shrieking damsel in the corridor.

Then there was the old couple returning from the Fair, who forgot to validate their ticket and would have been set off at the first station, at night fall, had not an influential passenger, attracted by the fraternal pin worn by the wife, interceded and they were allowed to retain their berth.

These are only a few of the little episodes which were served to the readers, eliciting various testimonials of appreciation.

I would like to go on and on telling of this incident and that which happened during my sojourn with this paper. Time and space, however, forbid, but I think that I have proved my point.

Everyone of those incidents could be used as the basis for a rattling good story. It's the story founded on happenings just such as these that lasts, too. Every writer who would write lasting stories must supply himself (or herself) with a storehouse full of just such incidents, and after my experience I can well recommend the country weekly as a fertile field for gathering them.

That much for the writer who aspires to fiction. To some of us it is most gratifying to note that today there is a tendency of the newswriter to stick to that branch of the profession. New opportunities are being discovered within that branch itself, and the inducements to make newswriting a profession instead of a stepping stone to a profession are much greater. But here, too, the country weekly plays its part. Mr. Martin has already told you through the columns of *The Writer's Digest,* how many famous journalists have graduated from the country weekly and small-town paper class.

And now as a closing thought, I would suggest to those who are always complaining, that opportunities are lurking all around us; oftimes in disguise. The wise men are those who grasp each opportunity as it presents itself, and thus are always ready for the next.

DOES THIS EVER HAPPEN TO YOU?

By James Clyde Bailey.

That happy phrase
I sought today—by stylists' laws,
That happy phrase,
Is worth the search of many days:
But fruitless labor bade me pause,
And turn into a homely clause,
That happy phrase.

THE ATROCITY OF ADVICE

By Frances Parkinson Keyes.

Author of "The Career of David Noble"
Printed through courtesy of Brentano's Book Chat.

THERE is probably no one to whom more advice is given than to the young woman who begins to write. If she achieves an essay, her friends tell her that she would probably do better with a story; if a story appears in print, other friends inform her that she had better stick to essays; while still others suggest that verse is the only exalted form of self-expression, or that scenarios furnish the only hope of really making money.

The matter does not rest there. If the burden of her song — whatever form it takes—is of a simple and harmless nature, her relatives ask her why she does not deal in something "a little more sophisticated"; and, if she ventures to do this, her husband's relatives are apt to regard her mournfully.

Meanwhile, one and all, these hearty well-wishers keep insisting that she ought to devote all her time to writing—it does not matter, apparently, whether the baby falls downstairs and the cook leaves and the house catches fire. It does not matter, especially, whether she has anything to write about. Her lot in life is not made any easier for her by her own doleful certainty that even if she can reconcile her conscience and her kitchen to her literary ambitions, this is not likely to be the main thing to anyone except her friends—who are not in the publishing business!

All this advice is followed—or supplemented—by other kinds, of a still more discouraging nature, usually from persons who have succeeded a little along the lines where she hopes to succeed a good deal. In order to hope for success, she is told by the self-conscious semi-professional, you must first be properly taught to write; you must spend years in schools and colleges where special attention is paid to lectures on English composition, or, failing this, you must risk the investment of a considerable sum of money in "Correspondence Courses," which, you discover upon investigation, cost more than you are likely to receive, for the stories you may perhaps write and possibly have accepted as a result of taking the courses. And finally, you must have "the proper atmosphere in which to concentrate."

Like most of my kind, I have patiently and for the most part silently endured the advice thus plentifully given me. But the poorest worm will turn.

To begin with, I am beginning to question whether so much education, in the sense in which we generally use the word, is necessary or even advisable. So few teachers are themselves creators. Personally, on account of ill-health and other interruptions, I never went to school but seven years in my life.

On the other hand, from the time I could read—and I could read at a very early age —I read, omnivorously, everything upon which I could lay my hands, and I still do. And I had a grandmother who, *before* I could read, read to me, and taught me to recite, pages and pages of the Bible by heart. Entirely aside from the spiritual inspiration which this gave me—an inspiration which has lasted always—it gave me as I believe it would give any child, a command of the English language which pages and pages of rules of syntax, carefully taught, could not impart. If I ever "learned to write" at all, I got my first lessons when I was four years old at my grandmother's knee, and my later ones from the heavy-laden shelves of my father's library; from wandering about, foot-loose, among the people — yes, and among the hills and meadows—of the Connecticut Valley, and, with not much more restriction, in a mental sense, all across this continent and Europe.

Two or three friends were calling on me not long ago, and one of them asked me how long it had taken me to write a certain article which has, apparently, been very successful. "One evening," I answered carelessly. "You are mistaken," one of the older women present said. "It took you years to write that article. Your whole life has gone into the making of it." I really

(*Continued on page 44.*)

The Writer's Digest

A Monthly Journal on Writing Photoplays, Short Stories, Poems, Popular Songs, Etc.

J. P. GARLOUGH - - - - - - - Editor

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How to accept and how to use criticism is a problem, that in all probability proves to be a greater stumbling block to the average writer than any other of the many questions arising from his work.

Criticism.

To the beginner it looms large although its real portent is often unrecognized and the wrong track is taken without the victim's knowing that a crisis has arisen. How often that occurs and how many writing careers are thus ruined any editor can testify. He can readily cite hundreds of first (and even subsequent) manuscripts that have arrived accompanied by a letter worded to the effect that the enclosed has been read by a host of friends and pronounced superb. The editor is indeed favored in being permitted to examine the offering, and so on in a similar vein. The editor can also tell you the many indignant letters received after such offerings are returned with a candid opinion of their true worth.

That is an example of our first instance—the failure of the beginner to distinguish between a desire to please on the part of friends, and true criticism based upon the merits of their work. Far too many an ambitious beginner runs afoul of this rock and leaves his literary career stranded here, a wreck.

A false conception of the power of inspiration is another stumbling block, but that is a subject for discussion in itself. Suffice it to say however, that far too many of those who aspire to write are led to reject helpful criticism and refuse to remold and rebuild their literary efforts because of the notion that such efforts are the product of a divine inspiration and should stand as first placed on paper.

Another stumbling block is, of course, the fakers, those who pose as critics but who are without any of the qualifications of such a position. These, of course, must be guarded against by those seeking help and instruction. They are in the minority, however, and usually a careful inquiry into their credentials before placing any great amount of confidence in them will single them out.

A certain amount of constructive criticism is necessary. It smoothes out the kinks which the author fails to see on account of his proximity to his work. Coming from one who is qualified it sets a standard for future efforts thus leading the aspirant a little farther with each new effort toward the goal of perfection.

It is a level mind than can accept criticism properly — that can calmly dissect a manuscript in accordance with the criticism offered and rebuild it into a better — more nearly perfect composition. It is a mind too, that will carry its owner far in the search of success.

Seek criticism but be sure that it is criticism. Accept criticism, but be sure that it comes from a proper source. Use criticism, but at the same time maintain that confidence in your own ability which is necessary to success.

The Writer's Market.

A few of our readers have the erroneous impression that notices appearing in The Writer's Market are advertisements. This is not the case, these notices being in reality the result of a careful endeavor to secure from editors, and producers, a statement of their particular manuscript needs each month.

In spite of a very careful check upon all information secured, we are sometimes confronted with an error after it is too late

(Continued on page 36)

THE SONGWRITER'S DEN

A Department Devoted to Song Writing and Song Writers

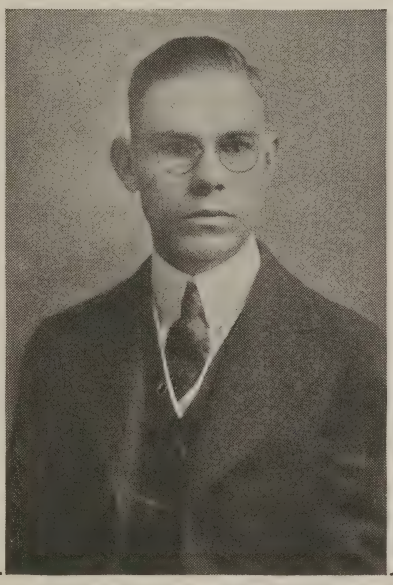
Conducted by C. S. Millspaugh

If you have a question for the Song Editor please observe the following rules: Address all inquiries to The Song Editor, care The Writer's Digest, Butler Building, Cincinnati, Ohio. All questions will be answered through these columns. Songs or manuscripts will not be returned unless a self-addressed stamped envelope is enclosed.

SONG ORIGINALITY

By Fred Keats.

IN some of the books that have been written on how to write popular songs, stress has been laid on the subject of "originality." The impression given has not been very encouraging to the green aspirant, he or she at once imagining that before them lay a most difficult task. In short, the aspirant, lacking in knowledge and self confidence, harbored a wrong conception of what this originality really meant. Strictly speaking, there is little true originality in popular songs. The subject field is too limited to admit of anything really new, although Mr. Charles K. Harris wrote me recently that: "There are always new ideas with original writers." It all depends on what one is willing to dignify with the words "new" and "original." The scientist's view of it, the fiction writer's view, and the view of the popular song writer will be on entirely different planes. In a popular-song-way, however, Mr. Harris is right, but what I desire now to do is to assure the aspiring, but timidly groping, amateur that he need not stand in great awe of that impressive word, "Originality." It is not half the bogey it seems, yet, at the same time, no one need assume that he is at liberty to take scissors and eliminate it from his dictionary entirely.



HAROLD AMBROSE THOMAS

When Harold Ambrose Thomas decided to tackle the writing profession as a means of livelihood, he had one decidedly first-class factor in his favor—"Hoss sense." That is, he applied "hoss sense" to the problems confronting him. Therefore he harbored no hallucinations concerning a "royal road" to writing fame; he knew it wasn't exactly a Tarvia-coated affair. He realized that competition was keen and active, and that certain features of the young authors' work must necessarily stand out vividly to counterbalance the more professional aspect of his more experienced competitor's work. He knew that "pull" and "favoritism" as factors for success in the writing game could not long give battle to such determined influences as work, perseverance, ability and study. In fact, H. A. T. thoroughly realized that Harold Ambrose Thomas was the only obstacle in the pathway of success.

As a result, Mr. Thomas has made rapid strides in his chosen profession. He writes short stories—and sells them. He writes photoplays—and sells them. He writes poems—and sells them; in fact, he has established a reputation as a clever writer of verse and prose compositions and is known far and wide as "The Buckeye Poet." Many of his poems appear regularly in the Cleveland (Ohio) News, and a new book of poems will shortly be published.

It is a short step from writing poems to writing songs, and Mr. Thomas also does this successfully. Some of his songs are: "Since You Are Gone," "Waiting," "Only a Girl You Used to Know," and "I'll Be Waiting For You." His most successful song, however, was "All That I Want is Just a Home," for this song literally brought him a home. That is, through the song he became acquainted with Miss Elsie Kunker, also a successful song writer, who subsequently became Mrs. Harold Ambrose Thomas.

The governing theme in popular songs is Love. This subject has been handled for decades by thousands of writers, and there is hardly the ghost of a chance of anyone today handling the subject in a genuine, genius-proving, original manner. Edison can be original in his magical way; so can Burbank with his strange flowers and fruits; but the field of the popular lyrist is too restricted, the materials too few, for anything startlingly new to be evolved, and nobody seriously

expects it. All the same, you need not slavishly copy the "other fellow." Dance by all means, but don't step on other peoples' toes.

Song-writing originality may be defined in three ways: *First:* A presentation of the theme in a fairly new and novel manner, particularly as regards title. Mr. Harris assures me that he has never conflicted with any other song title in thirty years of writing. To achieve this, one would have to familiarize oneself with the contents of every song publisher's catalogue in the land. Happily, there is a clearing house where a publisher can learn of any published song conflicting with his own, so that all a writer need worry about is that he does not adopt a title like any within his ken. If he does, it will be love's labor lost, and he'll have to do it all over again, sooner or later. This has happened to many songwriters in recent years, and is something that cannot always be avoided, for few writers have the time to interest themselves in anything but the leading *"Hits."*

Second: Originality in word-phrasing, and in catchy punch lines with a new "zip." This form of originality is by no means common, it being met with, to any free extent, only among the best lyrists, who are invariably born writers.

Third: Here we come to the "originality" of the common garden variety — which means nothing more nor less than, "I have not copied from another man's song. The work is my own. It is original with me. It may be like some other song I never heard of, but I thought it out myself." This song may be on lines similar to others of recent years. That is, the scene, the idea, the treatment, and the title may be treading too closely on the heels of others. Usually, this kills the new song. Sometimes, however, such changes can be made as to make the song entirely different, but few song writers relish the job of making a new roof and foundation for the structure they thought was O. K. It is too much like eating cold porridge on a frosty morning.

This third grade of originality is all that a great many song writers ever achieve. And does that mean anything detrimental to success? Not a bit of it! Some one-million-copy "hits" possessed no more real originality than a "hot dog." You can see, therefore, that true originality has very little to do with a popular success. Indeed, it is often the case that songs that are too marked a departure from the conventional are slated for comparative failure. When a song (positively good in its way) like "I Know What It Means To Be Lonesome," brings home the bacon, no one need lie awake nights worrying about intense originality. Kendis & Brockman knew the game, and they played it—to a full house. And how about the Rose of This Place, and the Rose of That? Everybody is trying to find a new spot on the map of the world to plant his own little Rosie! It is one of those popular themes that it seems impossible to do to death. Originality? My dear, dear Olaf, the lady disappeared long ago, and nobody knows where she is now.

So much for the lyric. Now, what about the music? Some people have told us that it is impossible to write an original popular style melody in the compass of one singing octave. This assertion is not to be taken too seriously. Like the originality of the lyric, it has its "explanations," though not the same. The writer believes that there are many fairly original tunes yet to come out of that much worried octave. "It all depends." Doubtless it is true that there are successful song composers who are now unable to produce anything new from the octave, but they keep on swelling their bank accounts just the same, so they should worry! What is the secret of their continued success? So far, no one has told us the mysteriously magic reason, ascribing each and every success to a whim of the public. In other words, a song success is supposed to be nothing more than a spin of the wheel—a gamble. To some extent this may be true, but there are other factors we must consider, without which the public whim would sulk and refuse to budge. One of these factors is "form" unity, and "in unity there is strength." If a song has unity (*it can have unity and be puerile, too!*) it is well balanced. If it is well balanced, it is pleasing. That which is pleasing is a success. If it is *not* pleasing how can it be a success?

What constitutes "good balance?"

First: Words that are simple and lovingly wedded to music that is not foreign in character to the sentiments expressed.

Second: Words that can be sung with comfortable articulation, and that can be "held" where necessary with any degree of power desired and come away "clean."

Third: Music that is absolutely catchy

and within the compass of the ordinary voice, D to D, or E to E, avoiding big jumps. (Don't refer to "The Love Nest!") There are exceptions to all rules. That song went over *despite* the big vocal jump that everyone has talked about. And, strange to say, that big jump was almost the whole show. (Can you beat that, Olaf, my boy?)

Speaking of "catchiness," there is a melodious type of popular music which falls short of true "catchiness." This catchiness is regarded as "cheapness" by the higher grade of musicians. Very well; if it is this catchiness which we must put into our music, so be it. Even the so-called high class popular ballads have that catchiness about them which the highbrow derides. But worry not over that, brethren songsters! Let us be practical and please the people. Classical music has its place, but it is usually far from simple. Now, the most satisfying things in life and art for you and I and the other fellow are the simple, unaffected things—and the GOOD popular song is one of them, so we'll just do our best to make it the way they like it, and the publishers will no doubt extend the glad hand.

Note.—The next article in this series will be "Song Writing In General," containing many valuable hints.

The Song Editor's Answers

G. R., Canton.—Your lyric is absolutely "the goods." It has everything. Fine construction, corking rhymes, startling title, first class development, and a brand new song idea. Don't waste this lyric on any "pay for publishing" proposition. Seek the services of a really competent composer and give it a tip-top musical setting. Then submit the manuscript to a list of honest-to-goodness music publishers. Any song is a gamble, of course, but this particular idea is much less of a gamble than usual. If the number is accepted by a reliable publisher you will not be requested to furnish financial assistance in bringing the number out. In fact, you will undoubtedly receive either a proposal to sell outright, or a contract to publish under a royalty agreement. Accept the royalty proposition. It is the best proposition in the long run. The best o' luck to you.

E. H. R., Syracuse.—"Sweetheart O' Mine" shows up splendidly in manuscript form. The melody you have written for this poem is catchy and nicely fits the words. No, it will not be necessary to have the number copyrighted or orchestrated before submitting it to publishers.

R. T., Bristol.—"All Day Long" is a first-class poem that undoubtedly could be used for a very high grade song. It is extremely well written. However, this idea is a bit too lofty and goes over the heads of the song-buying public. If you are working for posterity you are on the right track, but if the pocketbook is the dominating influence, strive to keep your inspirations well within the confines of public taste.

E. J. B., Winder.—Your lyric contains a first-rate idea and a fair title, but it isn't constructed after present day fashions. And your lines do not correspond in length. After all your precaution to avoid "traps" I sincerely regret the necessity of advising that you have apparently been "caught." Bona fide music publishers do not secure the copyright in the authors' name, and do not accept financial assistance in placing the song on the market. In all probability your only return from the investment will accrue from your personal activities in disposing of the printed copies allotted you.

A. C. D., Alcester.—Publishers have been known to accept song lyrics and sometimes song melodies without words, but for an unknown writer it is best to submit a song complete—words and music. Yes, the royalty plan is the most satisfactory basis for placing numbers. In my opinion your song could be used to far better advantage as a stage song than as a regular published number. In fact, a song of this character can easily be "made" from the stage.

O. P., Chicago.—Song styles change from time to time. "Ragtime" had its vogue which was followed by a sort of dressed-up ragtime called "jazz." Now jazz is apparently due to become passe. At least indications point that way. However, so long as the public maintains its present craze for the prevailing dance forms jazz will survive, and according to orchestra leaders the fox trot is still the most popular dance. Music men insist, nevertheless, that the old-fashioned waltz and ballad song is coming back. Yes, a "Mother" song is generally salable. It must be good, of course, and in all respects, but this type of song is always in demand.

A. O. R., Brandon.—Always be wary of the composer that guarantees certain publication. The person that can do this most assuredly possesses certain satisfactory connections that enable him to discharge his obligations in this respect; but, too true, the concern that "publishes" the number is more particularly a printing concern rather than a bona fide music publisher. Hence, it is easy to guarantee publication and offer satisfactory royalties on copies sold. As a matter of fact the song is not "published" and exploited as you fondly hope it will be. It is simply printed, and scores of inexperienced songwriters have learned to their bitter sorrow and disgust that the concern apparently makes no effort to dispose of the printed copies. Hence, there are no actual returns on the investment, unless you make a personal effort to sell those copies allotted you. You will find it far more satisfactory to get in touch with a really competent composer, have your lyrics set to excellent music, and submit to the various bona fide music publishing houses. In the event that your songs are accepted by established concerns it may mean large financial returns for you, but the other method means a larger initial cash outlay and one chance in a million of realizing a profit. No, do not entertain either of the "propositions" you mention.

A. J. D., St. Johns, Newfoundland.—Relative to your request, would advise that any of the publishers listed in this issue are bona fide, established concerns. The publisher you specially request information about is not listed herein. He is a publisher that apparently does not take kindly to amateuristic song efforts. He has been known to hold manuscripts for an indefinite period, in many cases never returning same, and often refuses to accept incoming manuscripts from the postman. Undoubtedly these methods are practiced in order to discourage submittances from outside sources.

Mrs. J. H. G., Lake Preston.—If you dispose of a song or song poem outright for cash you have no further "rights" or "say" in the disposition of same. If you wish to use the poem in a book of poems it is best to secure permission from the present owner. Secure the permission in writing and you will do much to avoid future controversies relative to the matter.

C. W., Scituate.—Note reply to A. O. R., Brandon. Your queries are identically the same.

C. B. Washington.—Yes, a good critic is indispensable to the songwriter. If your critic is capable, stick to him by all means and adhere to his advice and suggestions. Don't be too penurious. You can't expect him to sell his services without some cash reward. He can save you needless expenditures for musical settings for lyrics that are unworthy the expense, and aid you materially in pushing those that are. And his suggestions in other respects should be invaluable. Be guided by him; the author is a notoriously poor judge of his own work. A recent tremendous song hit was the idea of an inexperienced writer. The song earned close to thirty thousand dollars in royalties of all kinds. Unfortunately, the author received but a meagre thousand of this amount. He lacked certain specific knowledge, hence, he lost a fortune. Imagine what a good critic would have meant to this chap.

Mrs. H. T. L., Spartanburgh.—The ability of the person you mention is beyond question. Nevertheless, the composer that absolutely guarantees publication is in line for investigation, for no one can guarantee the acceptance of a song by the bona fide music publisher. Of course, the matter takes on a different aspect if the composer refers to the sort of "publisher" that merely prints song numbers but has no facilities for selling the song after it is "published." And from all indications this is exactly what has happened to you.

C. C., Chicago.—First, acquire a reputation as a songwriter. Most successful writers graduate into writing production numbers and their services are generally sought by the producing managers, as a matter of course. Such writers as "Al" Bryan, Ballard Macdonald, Joseph McCarty, and others, are now realizing upon the fruits of their apprenticeship for each has acquired a brilliant reputation. Talent counts. Fred. Coots has recently signed a contract to write exclusively for the Schuberts for a period of five years. This is an example of talent recognized. Your best bet is to team-up with a composer whose inclinations run the same as yours. Produce exceptional work, and preferably something that will "fit in" with the shows now running, and then peddle them to the various producing managers. If your work is truly brilliant they will give it consideration. Occasionally you may dispose of a number or two and thus build up secure foundations for the future.

G. E. T., Zona.—Lyrics of a religious nature are not in heavy demand, and do not sell for more than a dollar or two each. You might try the Hall-Mack Company, and the Homer Rodeheaver Company, both Philadelphia, Pa., establishments.

E. H., Lewisburgh.—Your lyric contains a fine idea, first rate rhymes, and a good title. However, your construction is very poor. Your lines do not correspond in length and your story is concentrated in the verse. It should concentrate in the chorus. You give eight lines to the verses and but four to the chorus. It should be the reverse for best results. In its present shape it is not advisable to have the lyric set to music. To the best of my knowledge there is no bona fide concern that would accept this poem, set it to music, and agree to publish on a royalty basis. You will find, however, plenty of concerns that will agree to set it to music at your expense, and publish. That is a losing proposition, however.

T. T. P., Fall River.—"Dear, Dear Me" is not a startling title. In fact it is not a startling composition in any sense. It is full of silly, unconnected lines and absolutely N. G. In twenty-four lines you haven't said much more than "Dear, Dear Me." If the concern you are negotiating with is so certain that the song is "wonderful," "full of possibilities," "a sure winner," etc., why not suggest to them that they take the payment they are so anxious about out of the "certain returns" they so plainly visualize. Candidly, the only "certain returns" this affair will bring you are first, discouragement, and then "enlightment," as to certain publishing methods.

The Writer's Market

(*Continued from page 32.*)

to change the announcement. These, however, are being reduced to a minimum.

A few months ago an announcement of a new magazine soon to be placed on the market was received from the publisher. After an exchange of several letters with the publisher and with the editor-to-be, a notice was placed in The Writer's Market outlining the manuscript needs of the new publication. Since then we have learned that some of our readers have sent manuscripts to this publisher and have had no reply. Letters from this office have likewise been ignored, and the new magazine has not made its appearance.

This instance is mentioned in order that readers may see how, what sometimes seem careless mistakes, originate.

The Writer's Market is maintained as a service to our readers, and to do this no effort will be spared. Your co-operation is asked in making this department as thoroughly up to date and as accurate as is humanly possible.

BETTER ENGLISH

This department is intended as an aid to the writer who is striving to improve his English. From month to month it will include correct synonyms—rhyming words—correct spelling—rules on correct usage, etc., etc. Communications to this department will be welcome.

WRINKLES IN SPEECH

By Robert C. Schimmel.

IF you would write pure, forceful English, you must then, at all times, speak pure, forceful English. Do not dismiss grammatical errors or other mistakes in speech by saying, "I know better"; resolve the moment you are conscious of faultiness, "to do better." A correction in diction is the first move toward better-written English. Besides, in these days, a man is judged by the English he speaks, as well as by the company he keeps, for carefully spoken English is more than a mark of education—it is the mark of perception and mental caliber. There is no excuse for slip-shod speech when chances abound for "self-cultivation" through intelligent perusals of carefully written magazines and books. If you are sincere and wish truly to develop yourself so that you can speak faultlessly and write the same way you must put yourself through a bit of schooling, self-imposed. Read good literature; correct yourself.

The best plan to follow in determining your faults is to subject your mind to periodic rigid inspection. For several days (or as long as is necessary) be conscious of what you say. Actually repeat to yourself after a conversation what you have said. Ask yourself, "Have I said 'ain't'?". The average person knows that 'ain't' is not allowable but is too lazy to eradicate the word from his speech. Some are truly unaware that they use the form and would be highly insulted were they to be accused. Sever connection with this class. Be as hard on your own speech as an editor is hard on your manuscripts. Avoid saying "I seen that the other day" or "I behaved like she did" (Remember: Like is correct when followed by a substantive without a verb). Do not make this mistake, "Have you got any?" (Use got only when the meaning is "to secure"; its use is improper when mere possession is indicated). If you make these simple little mistakes, rectify them, resolving to avoid them in your next speech. Attack, little by little, your problem of purification. Do not argue, as do some, that what you say, a slip now and then, makes no difference. Little "slips" have caused the world's troubles and the use of an "ain't" in conversation may some day mean mortification to you. That's the ethical side of the question; the practical side is this: you cannot rule out mistakes in writing if you do not rule out your mistakes in speech for your sense of correctness is dulled. To have finesse when you want it in writing you must practice it through preciseness in speech. Any editor is usually able to tell the person who *knows* English by the manifest ease with which he uses it. This ease is developed in everyday conversation, and this is why you must watch it.

The first day or so that you begin correcting yourself is liable to bring little improvement. You will make mistakes but you need not despair if you have the ability

A NEW SERIES

For some time we have had in mind a series of articles of a certain type for this department. At last we believe that we are able to offer you just that series. Robert C. Schimmel, of DePauw University, has prepared the articles for us. Some of those to appear in the next few issues are:

CHOOSING YOUR WORDS.

Vocabulary — Good Use—Present Use—Reputable Use — Connotation — Counter Words — Triteness — Elegance.

IMPROPRIETIES.

What is acceptable in language and what is not. Vulgarisms—Provincialisms—Colloquialisms.

SLANG.

What is it? A definition. How shall we consider it in relation to correct speech? What words have once been slang and are no longer?

HOW MANY WORDS?

Redundancy—Verbosity.

THE EDITOR.

to be conscious of them. New mistakes, not made the first day, will be sure to appear. Notice them. See whether you say, "He aggravated me." If you do you have misused the word aggravate: an illness is aggravated; a person is annoyed. Be careful not to use "don't" unwittingly. You would not say "He do not know" and yet "He don't know" tries to, and does, creep often into speech. If you have a guest coming for dinner and a doubt comes in your mind at the last minute as to whether he will appear, avoid this, "I expect that he is coming." Say, rather, "I suppose that he is coming"; or if the meaning has to do with expectation, then, "I expect him." Do not forget that "may" indicates permission; "can" indicates possibility, as "You may go if you can" meaning "you have *permission* to go if you are *able*." No words are more misused than "who" and "whom." Remember who is used as subject, whom as object, thus: "Who is sending this?" and "By whom is this sent?". Many use "transpire" to mean "occur." Its real meaning is "to become known." It is wrong to say, "The event transpired in 1914." This is right, "The event occurred in 1914; the cause did not transpire for several years."

Watch out for the interchange of adjectives and adverbs. You often hear, "I don't feel bad" which should be, "I don't feel badly." Sometimes: "It is real handsome" for "It is very handsome" or "I worked some yesterday" for "I did some work yesterday." Be conscious when you speak of what you are saying. Later you will speak easily without worry as to whether you are right or not. Make every sentence as near perfect as you can. (I might have said *nearly perfect* which would have been wrong.) Avoid "It was *proven*" "proven" is irregular; "it was proved" is right. Do not despair because you confuse "raise" and "rise." Remember that "raise" must have an object—that will help to keep you from mixing them. "I *rise* at six every morning," but "I *raise* two crops a year." "Sit" and "set" and "lay" and "lie" will be mastered too. "I sit down" but "I set a vase on the table"; "I lie down," "I lay an article on the table." Some days you may be discouraged for there seems much to remember, but the *will*, to do, conquers all obstacles.

The mistakes I have pointed out are but a few of the many that may be found in the speech of any person. This you know; it is with you, then, to use your knowledge. Whenever you find yourself making any error — noted above or otherwise — take yourself in hand. If possible, after two or three days, begin to keep a little memorandum of faults and at the end of each day go over these as did Franklin his moral errors; note them; and try hard the following day assiduously to avoid them. Diligence and effort will finally smooth out the wrinkles in your speech and you will in time have the pleasure that comes from confidence in yourself and what you say, well said. Do not feel that you have a right to be discouraged if you have not had a college education. A person with brains, and who uses them, may aspire to talk better (and succeed better in his aspiration) than a college graduate. You know—and I know—that it has been done.

What Happens to Your Scenario

(*Continued from page 24.*)

"Oh yes, sometimes. If I pass a story, we take it up in conference with Mr. Woods, and then it's considered by the directors, and if we buy it, it goes on to our staff of scenario writers, who put it into shape. We've bought perhaps fifteen in the last six months."

"There's another thing. You have no idea how many scenarios we get that are taken bodily from successful plays and books," said Miss Harmer. "We have in this office right now a scenario taken from Bernard Shaw—using even his exact words and sub-titles. We get Hugo and Balzac and even Shakespeare, not to mention hundreds of less well-known writers. People seem to think we, moving-picture people, have never read, nor seen nor heard anything."

"BRASS," Charles G. Norris' novel of marriage which the Duttons published last summer, is in its twenty-fourth edition, and the demand for it is constantly growing. The novel arouses so much discussion that every reader of it, whether pleased or otherwise, makes many others. The story is not an indictment of marriage, or of divorce, or of any other institution, or of conditions, but a calm and vivid picturing of the lives, the characters, the surroundings that lead inevitably to the results portrayed in the story.

OF IMPORTANCE TO EVERY WRITER

The New Edition of 1001 Places to Sell Manuscripts

THE great desk book for every writer who would keep fully informed regarding the market for manuscripts.

It brings to the writer the pertinent, exact information about a vast range of markets for book manuscripts, serials, short stories, articles, travel work, juvenile stories, essays, photoplays, post-card sentiments and mottoes, vaudeville sketches, plays, photographs, ideas, songs, humor—in fact everything in the way of literary material—that will enable the writer to dispose of his work to advantage. "1001 Places to Sell Manuscripts" is the great How to Sell, What to Sell, and Where to Sell Guide for all writers.

My copy of 1001 Places to Sell Manuscripts came today. I am much pleased with it. It is far and away better than the old book, of which I have a copy. It is certainly a book that every writer should have. I wish you success with your good work.—L. T. C., Oshkosh, Wis.

"1001 Places" came safely to hand as promised. Thank you. It seems comprehensive enough to prove helpful to "all sorts and conditions" of writers. I expect to refer to it often.—I. T. J., Lansing, Mich.

"1001" arrived, and it is entirely satisfactory.—E. R., Peterboro, N. H.

I acknowledge with thanks copy of 1001 Places to Sell Manuscripts. I find it full of valuable suggestions.—J. N. K., Wasington, D. C.

"1001" received. Its make-up is good, its print is better, it gives ambition a real impetus.—N. L. C., Frankford, Ind.

This is the eleventh edition of this work. For twenty years it has been recognized as the standard guide to the market for all classes of literary material. No writer who is offering manuscripts for publication can afford to do without it. A single new market opened to you—a single sale of your least important manuscript—will more than repay its cost.

It will help you to sell manuscripts. NOW READY. **PRICE $2.50.**

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JAMES KNAPP REEVE, Publisher, Franklin, Ohio.

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For more than twenty years this organization has been helping writers to perfect and to make salable their work. It was begun by Mr. James Knapp Reeve, who for more than half this period had it under his direct control. Mr. Reeve has now resumed this work and will give it his exclusive attention, and all manuscripts submitted will be read and advised upon by himself personally.

Mr. Reeve has for many years been engaged in various branches of literary work—as writer of fiction and miscellaneous articles for magazines which have had cumulative effect in giving a very full understanding of editorial needs and requirements. This experience can be applied to your own needs.

The charge for Reading, Criticism and Advice regarding sale is as follows:

1000 words or less	$ .75
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Address: *JAMES KNAPP REEVE, Franklin, Ohio.

***Founder and former editor of The Editor.**

THE WRITER'S FORUM

NEWS FROM OUR READERS

Conducted by John Patten.

In writing to the forum, kindly address all letters to the Forum Editor, care THE WRITER'S DIGEST, *Butler Building, Cincinnati, Ohio. And remember, the Forum wants to hear from you on any subject of interest to writers.*

HOW time does fly! It seems but yesterday that we were scribbling down our bit for the March DIGEST, and yet our allotted thirty days has flown, and here we are working in haste while with our left hand and vigorous nods of our head, we fend off the editor's urgent demands for speed.

They're hungry mammals anyhow, these editors, always demanding that your brain work upon a schedule and that copy be on hand by a certain date so that their rattling and roaring old typesetters can be kept in motion. They're a hungry lot, that is, when they want something, but otherwise—. No, we'll not say it. From the outline that we've seen for the April issue it appears that the editors are already in for their share of attention. And anyway, this isn't a "knocker's" club. We do hope, though, that a number of Forum readers will enter the contest which is being announced, and send in their most interesting experience with the editors.

And now that it is off our mind, and we are to have a few minutes peace, let's see what has been happening of late.

The Author's Club, at its thirty-ninth annual meeting, held recently in Carnegie Hall, New York, announced that a large majority of its two hundred and sixty members had voted that the book of the most enduring value to American literature published during 1921 was *The Collected Poems* of Edwin Arlington Robinson.

* * *

John Haynes Holmes writes of Zona Gale's poems recently published under the title of *The Secret Way:* "Unless I am very much mistaken, and no judge of poetry at all, this book is going to win immediate and permanent recognition as a real contribution to the poetic literature of America today. The poems have deep feeling, reveal acute insight into the deeper meaning of things, and that fine vision of love and beauty which is the possession and therefore the symbolic sign, of the true poet." Miss Gale has achieved enviable fame as novelist and dramatist and now bids fair to parallel her other successes with her work as poet.

Our readers will recall the sketch of Miss Gale's Life published in the October, 1921, issue.

* * *

In the recent novel "Dodo" E. F. Benson makes the following statement: "No one is ever bored unless he is comfortable. That's the great principle. There isn't time for it. You cannot be bored and something else at the same time."

There is a lot of truth in that statement, and to writers it should carry a definite suggestion. In fact, a worth-while motto might be adapted from it somewhat after this fashion: "The reader cannot be bored if he is otherwise occupied. Hold his interest at all times with the action of your story."

* * *

Arthur Stringer, the Canadian writer, has purchased a home in New Jersey, and intends to make this his permanent residence. His latest novel is "The Prairie Child." It is the third of the Prairie Triology; the previous volumes being "The Prairie Wife" and "The Prairie Mother."

* * *

What, where, or why is YOLLOP? George Barr McCutcheon, who has chosen it as the title for his new book, need have no fear of anybody confusing it with any other title. Yollop is distinctly Yollop.

* * *

Stephen Leacock returned recently, after a three months' lecture tour of England and Scotland, to resume his duties as Professor of Political Economy at McGill University, Montreal. He promises, however, to find time to tell about his "Discovery of England," in a new humorous book which will

THE WRITER'S ART

BY THOSE WHO HAVE PRACTICED IT

Edited by ROLLO W. BROWN

372 pages. 12mo. $2.50

Twenty-eight essays on literary craftsmanship by successful authors such as Hazlitt, Emerson, Frank Norris, Stevenson, Henry James, Joseph Conrad, and Sir Arthur Quiller-Couch. Now in use as a text in leading American colleges.

"We naturally expect much of the author of *How the French Boy Learns to Write*, and in the present volume we are not disappointed. Professor Brown has here collected twenty-eight essays that present a wealth of suggestions from successful writers. The introduction is unusually stimulating and suggestive. After finishing this book, no teacher of composition can rise without feeling that he is better prepared for carrying on his work."—*Bulletin of the Illinois Association of Teachers of English.*

"Makes very agreeable reading."—O. W. Firkins in *The Weekly Review.*

"He has always chosen well, and has provided a valuable source-book for the philosophy of literary mechanics."—*Catholic World.*

"The majority of these opinions and suggestions bear so directly upon the art and craft of letters that the information they offer should relieve all but fools of their folly."—*The Freeman.*

"It is refreshing to feel that somebody at least appreciates the fact that contact with the great masters of style is the only effective way of teaching English."—*Boston Transcript.*

"There is not an article in the book which the young author (or the old) might not read with the greatest profit and pleasure. Unexpected discoveries occur to one as one reads."—*New Statesman.*

"A book to be desired and enjoyed even by those who do not use it for instruction."—E. L. Pearson in *The Weekly Review.*

"The editor shows an unhackneyed appreciation of what is weighty or suggestive."—*Springfield Republican.*

"This is an excellent selection. . . . I am glad to express my gratitude for the bringing together of the useful and interesting passages collected in this volume."—Brander Matthews in *New York Times.*

"I wish to congratulate you on the attractive form you have given it. The book itself seems to me a highly useful addition to the equipment which is available for those who wish to study the art of writing English."—Professor N. W. Barnes, University of Chicago.

Harvard University Press

3 Randall Hall
CAMBRIDGE, MASS.

15 West 44th St.
NEW YORK CITY

be published later in the year. With G. K. Chesterton expounding on "Things 'He' Saw in America" and Stephen Leacock "Discovering England," this promises to be a lively season in international literary bouts.

* * *

Many and varied are the reasons given by beginning authors as to their reasons for quitting the writing game, but the following is comparatively new:

"It seems that this young would-be had suddenly quit when he was just beginning to get a foot-hold on the knack of putting it down in black and white. Asked the reason why, he gave this reason—

"'I sold a joke to a magazine and at the rate my heart went when I received that check I guess it would bust if I sold a story. So I've decided that the safest way was to quit writing stories'."

Yes, a writer friend sent us that one and it appealed to us as a pretty good reason—much better in fact than a lot of those which our friend the Editor culls from his daily mail to show us.

And while we are in a humorous vein, have you heard either of these? Yes, we clipped them so we'll not feel hurt if you recognize them.

A famous English author prided himself on his set of Shakespeare, beautifully bound. One day his wife came to him and announced that rats had begun to gnaw one of the volumes. "Dear, dear," he replied, "even the rats think it is Bacon."

First Poet—"Do you take any interest in free verse?"

Second Poet—"No; the only kind I have any enthusiasm for is the kind I can sell."

* * *

We're not particularly given to preachments, but the following clipping which was found in the *Baltimore News* made us stop and think for a little while. Perhaps it will do likewise unto you, Mr. Reader. At least, a little self examination is a good thing from time to time, and the following suggestion may prove worth while:

"At a recent meeting of a London literary club an author gave an address on the subject, 'Why Write?' Lest anyone should accuse him of adopting any pose of literary Pharisaism, he frankly treated his theme autobiographically, and for this purpose set out arithmetically his motives (a) when he first began to write and (b) at the present day. In the first case the total was made up of 50 per cent ambition, 25 per cent vanity, 20 per cent of urge to earn a living and 5 per cent something to say. In the second case ambition had disappeared and the proportions had changed to 50 per cent earning a living, 25 per cent vanity, 25 per cent something to say.

Not every author would be willing to dissect his own motives so frankly and with so much sense of humor, and it is well that someone who is himself a writer should raise the curtain a little on the subject of the art and craft of writing."

* * *

Norman Davey, in "The Pilgrim of the Smile," tells the story of the waiter who took the impressario's place one night and thrilled London with his violin. Apropos of which the successful manager gives his ideas about genius:

"If he's a genius he'll push his way; and when he's pushed his way and made a stir I'll pick him up. Aw, you don't know what genius is; you talk like a bally school girl. Genius is not being able to play or paint or write or any damned thing — thousands can do that. It's push, man, push—genius is guts."

There's a lot of encouragement in that statement for the person who wants to write, because there is a lot of truth in it. Push, just plain push goes a long way toward making any genius. Natural ability wouldn't get anywhere without the initiative and push which put it to work, and as for acquired ability—well, how would it be acquired without the push necessary to enable one to go and get it?

* * *

Zane Grey's novel "Wildfire" has just been picturized, and is soon to be released to the public under the title "When Romance Rides."

* * *

Another novel recently adapted to the screen is William J. Locke's "The Glory of Clementina."

* * *

And now, we note again that the editor is making signs that denote the need of haste in completing this copy. We suppose that we must accede to his demands, as we all usually do with these editors.

But since he is in such a hurry we're going to see if he will overlook this letter. It isn't considered good practice by the

Her First Scenario Was Bought by D. W. Griffith

And she won the first cash prize of $2,500 in the J. Parker Reade contest against a field of 10,000 scenarios.

WHEN Frances White Elijah was doing war work in her Chicago home, she never imagined she would become a successful photoplaywright.

What reason had she to think she would ever write such a letter as this to the Palmer Photoplay Corporation:

"I have just received your check in payment for my story 'Wagered Love,' which your sales department sold to D. W. Griffith. "It has scarcely been six months since I registered with you and your assistance and encouragement have made my success seem like magic."

Frances White Elijah learned how to transfer her creative imagination to the screen. Will you send for a free test of YOUR ability?

Think what that means! Her *first* scenario sold to one of the most discriminating producers in the world. And she had only started to train her story-telling gift six months before!

Stimulated by her brilliant success, this Chicago girl developed herself into a professional screen writer for a great Los Angeles studio. Today she enjoys fame and income; and the distinction of having written the best of 10,000 scenarios submitted in the J. Parker Read contest.

What does this story mean to you? If it causes you to ask yourself "Could *I* sell a story to Griffith—or Ince—or any of the producers?" this will prove the most interesting advertisement you ever read.

Perhaps you could do that very thing

The one and only requisite of scenario writing is ability to think out and tell a good, dramatic story. Given that ability, *any man or woman can be trained to write for the screen.*

But, you say, how can I know whether I have that ability?

To answer that question is the purpose of this advertisement. The Palmer Photoplay Corporation will gladly apply to you a scientific test of creative imagination, provided you are an adult and in earnest. And we shall do it free.

Send for the Van Loan questionnaire

The test is a questionnaire prepared for the Palmer Photoplay Corporation by H. H. Van Loan, the celebrated photoplaywright, and Prof. Malcolm MacLean, formerly of Northwestern University. If you have any story-telling instinct, if you have ever said to yourself when you left a motion picture theatre: "I believe I could write as good a screen-story as that," send for this questionnaire and find out for yourself just how much talent you have.

We shall be frank with you; have no fear. The Palmer Photoplay Corporation exists first of all to *sell photoplays.* It trains photoplay writers in order that it may have more photoplays to sell. It holds out no false promise to those who can never succeed.

With the active aid and encouragement of the leading producers, the Corporation is literally combing the country for new screen writers. Its Department of Education was organized to develop the writers who can produce the stories. The Palmer institution is the industry's accredited agent for getting the stories without which production of motion pictures cannot go on. Producers are glad to pay from $500 to $2,000 for good original scenarios.

We invite you to apply this free test

Clip the coupon below, and we shall send you the Van Loan questionnaire. You assume no obligation, but you will be asked to be prompt in returning the completed test for examination. If you pass the test, we shall send you interesting material descriptive of the Palmer Course and Service, and admit you to enrollment, should you choose to develop your talent. If you cannot pass this test, we shall frankly advice you to give up the idea of writing for the screen.

This questionnaire will take only a little of your time. It may mean fame and fortune to you. In any event it will satisfy you as to whether or not you should attempt to enter this fascinating and highly profitable field. Just use the coupon below—and do it now before you forget.

PALMER PHOTOPLAY Corporation, Dept. of Education, W. D. 4
124 West 4th St., Los Angeles, Cal.

PALMER PLAN OF PHOTOPLAY WRITING

PLEASE send me, without cost or obligation on my part, your questionnaire. I will answer the questions in it and return it to you for analysis. If I pass the test, I am to receive further information about your Course and Service.

Name.....

Address.....

.....

editors to print letters praising THE WRITER'S DIGEST in the editorial columns, but this letter which I happened to pick up in the office seemed to have a note running through it that should be of help to others, and as the praise is for one of the contributors, perhaps we will be excused for including it here.

THE WRITER'S DIGEST,
Cincinnati.

J. P. GARLOUGH, *Editor.*

Dear Sir: Heartfelt appreciation, like many other things, is usually "better late than never." I am one of the great throng of amateur writers, and needless to say, I've had my disappointments.

This month it seemed that rejection slips and Flu' did their work, until I received a late copy (December), of the DIGEST. When I opened it, the first thing that I saw was a short rhyme, "To Young Authors" by William Sanford. I don't know whether I could be classed as any kind of an author, or not; but I appreciated that interest and encouragement.

Accompanying this, is a short poem of mine, in which I have tried to thank him for his helpful interest.

A "student" of the DIGEST,
C. SYLVAN OLSEN.

TO SANFORD

Sir, I do not know you,
I've never seen your face,
To me you're but a stranger
In this, Life's fevered race.
But still there is a feeling,
That you're an old, old friend,
And not of the sneering set
Who, other's ambitions rend.
Yours the heart of sympathy,
We amateur writers know!
Tell the world! We're for you
Till all the Four Winds blow.

C. SYLVAN OLSEN.

The Atrocity of Advice

(*Continued from page 31.*)

believe she is right. And if that is true of the article, it is even more true of my new novel "The Career of David Noble." If I had not known "Hamstead" all my life and loved it as long as I have known it, if my ancestors had not settled the valley where it lies, a hundred and fifty years ago and lived there ever since, there is no teacher in any class-room in the world who could have taught me to write that story.

FIRST EFFORTS

By William Sanford.

GETTING the right start in writing is everything. It saves the work of starting all over again, so to speak. It is a well known fact that the greater majority of those who aspire to the magazines write what they consider a masterpiece, send it to one of the very best magazines published, and then get it back. After writing a few more manuscripts which are personally considered masterpieces, and getting these also back with the stereotyped rejection slip they quit cold, and that's the end of their literary careers. It is the small minority that pulls through the hard sledding and makes the goal.

It is reasonable to suppose that many of those who attempt the game are not suited for it, but would do better in some other line. If everyone became successful in literary work that attempted it there would be a good many million successful writers, for more young people try literary work, under the impression that it is an easy and quick road to wealth, than any other line under the sun. Just inquire around among your circle of acquaintances and if you get the facts of the matter you will find that a good many of them at some time or another "sent something to a magazine." Most people who have tried it, however, with no success whatever, are reticent about mentioning it. That is why one doesn't hear about it. No one likes to acknowledge failure.

If a beginner could simply detach himself or herself from his or her own exhilarated enthusiasm over those first stories and try to view them calmly from the viewpoint of an outsider they would easily see that the efforts were not suitable for the best magazines in the country. The story seems very wonderful simply because *it is* the author's own work. He or she loses sight of the *true worth* as regarded from the editor's viewpoint.

Write a story and say to yourself, after you have finished reading it: "Would I expect to see a story like that in Harper's or Century, Saturday Evening Post or some other high-grade magazine? What would I think if I did see it in one of these magazines? Would it seem in keeping with the high general tone of the other stories in these publications?" This is one way to help get away from one's own viewpoint.

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The dominating idea back of the "IDEAL" Course is HELPFULNESS—we want to assist the greatest number of aspiring writers—we want to get them started RIGHT on the road to success. YOU and every other ambitious writer who longs to write for the dailies is offered a remarkable opportunity during the present month.

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The "IDEAL" Course in Newswriting and Correspondence has been selling at $10.00. That it is easily worth it has been proved many times over—our files contain innumerable letters from students who would willingly pay twice this amount, if necessary, to get the information they secured from their "IDEAL" course. But we believe that there are many struggling young writers who, at the present time, cannot afford to invest this amount. And these are the writers we intend to help by offering a regular "IDEAL" Course in Newswriting and Correspondence and a year's subscription to the WRITER'S DIGEST for only $5.00. But you must act IMMEDIATELY.

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Another way would be to let an absolutely frank and disinterested acquaintance read it who was a reader of good magazine stories in current publications.

It has been printed that the editors of Harper's, Century, Atlantic, and Scribner's get fully half of the first efforts of would-be writers. Of course, there have been instances where a first effort has been accepted with one of these publications, but these instances are not one in five hundred.

It is well to aim high if you have the goods to win a high place, but if you haven't it is a postage bill saver to aim lower and work up.

I think that the writing of short sketches is one of the best means of later story writing. It teaches the mind to condense, to use good titles, and to get interest and pep into the little tale, all of which will train the mind to grasp and accomplish more readily these important things in longer work.

And then after that first acceptance and check comes in!

Well, you who have got 'em know how it feels!

THE WRITER'S MARKET

All up-to-date and accurate information regarding suspended or discontinued publications, the needs of various publications and publishing houses as stated in communications from editors and announcements of prize contests in any way involving the literary profession will be found in this column.

MARKET QUERIES

A department devoted to suggesting possible markets for your manuscripts. In writing to this department PLEASE OBSERVE THE FOLLOWING RULES: (1) *Address all questions to The QUERY Man, c/o The Writer's Digest.* (2) *DO NOT SEND YOUR MANUSCRIPTS.* (3) *Describe your manuscript in not more than fifty words. Questions of greater length will not be printed.* (4) *Enclose a stamped self-addressed envelope if you wish a direct reply.* (5) *Remember, there is no attempt to guarantee a sale of your manuscript. The Query Man will suggest a list of possible markets and he will conscientiously try to list the best possible markets.*

D. M. G., New Rochelle, N. Y. We do not know of any person who could act for you to advantage in the matter you mention. In reply to your query as to how the selling price for a manuscript is arranged: We would say that it is always advisable for a young writer to leave this matter entirely to the editor of the publication which purchases his work. He will receive fair treatment and a price commensurate with the value of his offering.

H. E. H., Jacksonville, Fla. Can you give me a list of publications that buy photographs and write-ups?

Answer. An immense number of publications buy such material. It would be necessary to know what ground you attempt to cover before we could make a list. The American and other magazines use personality write-ups with photographs; agricultural journals use agricultural write-ups; poultry journals, out-door magazines and others have their own specialties.

George K., Ark. Please inform me regarding the proper way to send off a manuscript—whether it should be typewritten, kind of paper, etc.

Answer. Very few editors will read a manuscript that is not typed. Use 8½ x 11½ paper of good quality, double-spaced, and leave a margin of one inch on each side and at top and bottom of your sheet.

A. M. D., Eden, Man. Where can I sell a juvenile story of forty-five hundred words, entitled "World's Journey of a Drop of Water," written from a child's point of view?

Answer. It is pretty difficult to place a juvenile story so long as this. Fifteen hundred to twenty-five hundred words would stand a much better chance of acceptance. If you can reduce it to that length try the David C. Cook Co., Elgin, Ill.; Presbyterian Board of Publication, Philadelphia; Classmate, Cincinnati; Beacon, Boston. We do not know the company regarding which you ask, nor have we had any announcement of the winner in the contest named.

J. C. M., Mission, Can. What producing companies are calling for scenarios with action, scenes laid in the West and Northwest?

Answer. Try Brentwood Film Corporation, Los Angeles; American Film Co., Santa Barbara, Cal.; Crystal Film Co., 524 Longacre Bldg., New York; Goldwyn, Co., 469 Fifth Ave., New York; Metro Pictures Corporation, 1764 Broadway, New York.

L. N. L., Columbus, Ohio. Question. Could you suggest a market for a story which depicts through the medium of a baseball game the struggle for political mastery between Julius Caesar and Brutus as portrayed in Shakespeare's "Julius Caesar"? Caesar and Brutus are captains of the two opposing teams. Story is humorous with historical background.

Answer. Such a story as you suggest, if it does not run over a thousand words, might do for Life or Judge. Any longer story of exaggerated humor is pretty difficult to place, and we could not hazard an opinion regarding markets, for it would be only guesswork, having never seen the manuscript.

A. H. T., Norwalk, Ohio. Question. Where can I sell a religious story of 3,000 words entitled "The Gospel at Stony Ridge"? The story concerns a minister and a girl. A gang attempt to drive the minister out of town, but the girl appears on the scene, and the gang are all converted. Then the minister tells the girl of his love and thus all ends well. The story takes place in a western mining town.

Answer. There are not many religious journals that pay anything worth while for fiction. You might try The Christian Herald (New York), Christian Endeavor World, Christian Science Monitor (Boston); but with the material that you have, why not make a fiction story, not distinctly religious, but with your minister as a central character? Then you would have something that might be offered to a wider range of publications.

J. D. R., Jersey City, N. J. Question. Please let me know if it is necessary to put a photoplay in scenario form, or will it be salable if I just write it out in synopsis form. Also suggest possible market for five-reel Western comedy-drama, of the type that Tom Mix usually appears in, written in the way described above.

Answer. Yes, write out a clear synopsis of your photoplay and it will be considered just as readily as if you had the detailed scenario. It is quite impossible for us to name any especial producer to which any photoplay might be offered without knowing more of the character and quality of the work than is indicated in your letter.

E. E. P., Mansfield, Ohio. Question. Do you think it advisable for an amateur writer to write stories of about three thousand words instead of the longer ones? Are they more likely to be read? I have written a nine thousand word story—starting it with the proper punch—but I am sure it was not read by the editors to whom I sent it, not all through, at any rate. Do you think a note enclosed with my story from some famous author, such as Peter B. Kyne, would help to put it over, providing I could get one that would state that my story was worthy of the most careful consideration? Would such a note be possible to get if I offered the author a reading fee, it being understood, of course, that the story would really merit the note? What do you think of such an idea? Would it be advisable to try?

Answer. It does not make any difference whether your story is 3,000 words or 6,000 words in length. It depends wholly on whether you have the material to warrant the length. If you have that you may run to 9,000, 10,000 or 12,000 words and find editors ready to buy. No, most emphatically, do not try to get any letter of commendation from any well-known author. In the first place, you couldn't do it, and in the second place, it would prejudice an editor against you. Send your stories and let them stand on their merits. That is what the present well-known authors had to do in the beginning. First make sure that you have a good story, and then determine as best you can, to what magazines it would be suited.

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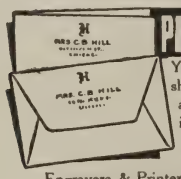

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J. N. K., New York City. Question. Will you please inform me what magazine would be interested in an article entitled "The Medals and Decorations of South and Central America"? The Pan American Bulletin, for which same is written, says "it is not official enough."

Answer. I fear that your topic is not of sufficient general interest easily to win the attention of editors. Unless you could get in a good deal of picturesque filling, telling of the origin of these medals and decorations, what they mean, the circumstances under which earned and bestowed, it would be rather dry-as- dust topic for the average American reader. But if you can make it sufficiently picturesque, I might say that you may get a hearing in almost any of the Sunday Magazine sections of the metropolitan newspapers. I can hardly think that it would fit any of our literary publications, illustrated magazines, etc.

H. M. M., Crookston, Minn. Question. Can you tell me where to send a comic verse adapted for Phonograph records? Verse is strictly up to date. I have a song poem called "Sweet Palestine," dealing with the return of the Jews to the promised land, etc. Will you suggest a market for this? Also suggest markets for jokes, puzzles, and illustrated jokes outside of "Life" and "Judge."

Answer. We do not know where you could dispose of verse for phonograph records, unless to the manufacturers of phonographs. It is impossible to say where a poem could be placed without knowing its length, character, quality, etc. Any suggestion based merely on the title would be guesswork and might lead you astray. For your other material, try Wayside Tales, Film Fun, Home Brew, Double-Dealer, Whiz-Bang.

Mrs. J. C. B., Walker, Cal. Question. Will you please suggest a market for a juvenile story of 3,700 words of interest to girls 12 or 15 years of age? I find the manuscript too long for publications that I am acquainted with, and I am confident that it is a good story. "The Young Catholic Messenger" marked it "Good," but could not use it on account of its length. I cannot cut down the story without altering the plot.

Answer. A story of 3,700 words is too long for juvenile periodicals. If you will examine any of them, you will find that their stories run from 1,000 words to a maximum of perhaps 2,500. Consequently we cannot suggest avenues for publication.

J. M. P., Cumberland, Md. Question. Kindly send me the addresses of some motion picture producers who might be interested in the following types of plays: Plays of the Northwestern type, Western dramas, Virginia Mountain stories, lumber camp stories, stories of plain farm folks, pioneer plays, and plays of society folks having come down to simple life.

Answer. We can hardly make out a list of producers for the different types of plays named by you. One reason is that the plans of producers change rapidly, and another is, that most of the companies will consider a really good scenario of almost any type. There are some exception, where producers confine themselves to plays for certain actors, or to work of a single type. But speaking generally, you may properly

offer your work, in any of the lines named, to any of the standard producers, such as Goldwyn, The International Film Co., Lasky, and others.

J. H., Poplar Bluff, Mo. Question. Will you kindly advise possible markets for two articles, one dealing with Indian and prehistoric relics found in this section, and the other about a large collection of horns and hides of animals, and taxidermy.

Answer. If you have something original and interesting on either of the above, or both of them, and especially if you have some good illustrations to go with the articles, you may properly offer same to the Sunday Magazine section of any one of the metropolitan newspapers. The material is not quite in line for general magazine use.

S. M., Chicago, Ill. Question. Kindly advise where I can sell a story suitable for the boy and girl of 12-16 years of age. About 9,000 words.

Answer. We cannot name, very definitely, probable markets for a juvenile story without knowing more of its character. But we would say that the Classmate (Cincinnati), Forward (Philadelphia), Boys' Comrade (St. Louis, Mo.), Boys' World (Elgin, Ill.), Beacon (Boston, Mass.), American Sunday School Union (Philadelphia), Baptist Board of Publication (Nashville, Tenn.), Epworth Era (Nashville, Tenn.), Junior Christian Endeavor World (Boston), Little Folks (Salem, Mass.), are open to considerable of such material.

None of these, however, would use a story of 9,000 words, unless as a serial, cut up into short chapters.

P. P., Des Moines, Iowa. Question. Kindly suggest possible markets for short comic synopsis, wherein the typical Southern darkies are portrayed in all of their weird superstitions and funny actions. I have several of these and believe there are picture concerns making this type.

Answer. The Ebony Film Corporation, 608 S. Dearborn St., Chicago, uses material of this sort. Aside from this we really do not know where such scenarios could be offered with any hope of acceptance, unless to the Christie Film Co. (Los Angeles), The American Film Co. Santa Barbara), or the Selznick Pictures Corporation (New York), and others that use general comedy stuff.

Prize Contests

Contemporary Verse, Logan P. O., Philadelphia, Pa., is offering the following prizes: The special Gene Stratton-Porter prize of $50, five first prizes of $40 each, and five second prizes of $20 each to the poets whose work in the magazine during 1922 shall be deemed most worthy. The judges will be Grace Hazard Conkling, Witter Bynner, and Professor William Lyon Phelps. They are also offering the Galahad Sonnet prize of $25 for the best sonnet in the Elizabethan form. Judges: Joseph Andrew Galahad, David Morton, and John French Wilson.

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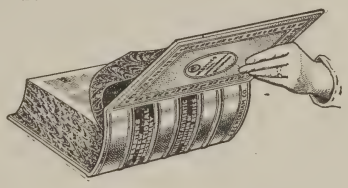

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Fiction and General Publications

HIGH SCHOOL LIFE, 58 E. Washington St., Chicago, Ill. Editor, Florence Forbes. "We need stories (that will appeal to High School and Junior college students) and articles, both humorous and serious, 5,000-6,000 words especially; some shorter, also." Manuscripts are reported on in three weeks or earlier, and payment is made on publication.

THE PHOTODRAMATIST, 536 I. W. Hellman Bldg., Los Angeles, Cal. Hubert LaDue, Editor. "We can use at all times inspirational, constructive articles, of not more than 1,500 words, that deal with some phase of writing for the screen. Generalizations not wanted. Articles must treat on some special phase of photoplay writing, such as 'How I Obtain Photoplay Ideas,' 'My Method of Plot Construction,' etc., etc. Articles headed, 'Strive and Succeed,' 'How to Win Success,' etc., etc., are NOT wanted. We pay a half-cent per word, on acceptance, and give decisions within two weeks. Whenever possible, we desire a photograph of the author, which we run with the article accepted. A brief autobiography —giving pertinent facts regarding author's literary career, or other interesting information—is also desirable for use as an editorial caption beneath cut or in box with the article. We do not want articles on censorship or information regarding any of the 'stars,' i. e., 'fan' stuff. Are flooded with that sort of material by press agents."

SOCIAL PROGRESS, 205 West Monroe St., Chicago, Ill. Editor, Caroline Alden Huling. "Just at present we are seriously overstocked with material of every description. The only thing that we might consider would be a good serial of about six numbers. This should be fiction with a good heart interest. Our policy, being to make each issue feature a special subject, requires articles to be prepared by writers experienced in the several lines selected; therefore, we have little space for general contributions. Aside from serial fiction, we shall not be in the market again before September. Some rejected manuscripts are returned at once, others are read and determined upon as soon as possible. Our rule is to pay the month following acceptance, and our minimum rate of payment is $4.00 a thousand."

THE BOOKPLATE ANNUAL, 17 Board of Trade, Kansas City, Mo. Editor, Alfred Fowler. "Our present special needs are for articles on old and modern bookplates. We report on manuscripts promptly and pay on acceptance."

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BETTER TIMES, 100 Gold St., New York City. Editor, George J. Hecht. "Better Times publishes the news of the charitable and social welfare organizations in New York City. It also prints articles on the administrative and business problems of social agencies."

ASIA, The American Magazine on the Orient, 627 Lexington Ave., New York City. Editor, John Foord. "We are interested in articles dealing exclusively with the Orient and in fiction with oriental backgrounds and characters written by authors who have had first-hand contacts with the Orient and understand the peoples and customs thoroughly. We prefer to have good photographs accompany any articles sent to us. We are more interested in articles dealing with oriental countries off the beaten track of travel, such as Java, Sumatra, Borneo, Siam, Afghanistan, Tibet, Turkestan, the Celebes, and the less frenquently visited provinces of India. We prefer articles not to be longer than 5,000 words. Regarding photographs, the glossy contact prints are preferred, showing unusual customs, crafts and methods of doing things." Manuscripts are reported on in three weeks, and payment is made shortly after acceptance usually.

SHORT STORIES, Garden City, New York City. Editor, Harry E. Maule. "We use serials, complete novels, novelettes, short stories—strong in plot and action, and of masculine appeal. Our editorial policy calls for material dealing with adventure, mystery, the out-of-doors, sport, business, humor, etc. We only use a very minor love interest, and no material having sex appeal." Manuscripts are reported on from ten days to two weeks, and payment is made on acceptance.

PEOPLE'S POPULAR MONTHLY, Des Moines, Iowa. Editor, Carl C. Proper; Managing Editor, Miss Elizabeth B. Canaday. "We accept only those short stories which will afford genuine recreation or wholesome inspiration to people in the small towns of the Middle West. These readers are, of course, quite like the rest of the world, in that they enjoy a swiftly moving mystery story, a tale of adventure, a big human sort of love story, and the narrative which portrays the victory of some individual over difficulties. We are especially eager to emphasize the opportunity for happiness and personal attainment in the smaller communities. We are interested in articles concerning the unusual in community activities and neighborhood enterprises. While we do not welcome the 'triangle' or 'cabaret' type of material, yet our readers are not old-fashioned, not 'hayseedy' and not morbid. Short stories

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SUCCESS MAGAZINE, 1133 Broadway, New York City. Howard Brubaker, Managing Editor. "We are in the market for short stories, personality articles, especially those dealing with men and women who have achieved or are now rising to success. Not in the market extensively for inspirational materials, such as essays or editorials, as those are supplied mostly by our own editorial staff." Manuscripts are reported on immediately, usually within two days, and payment is made on acceptance.

The name of THE BORDER GATEWAY has been changed to THE INTERNATIONAL MONTHLY, and all communications shall be sent to 3245 N. 27th St., Philadelphia, Pa.

CAPITAL MAGAZINE, Washington, D. C. The first appearance of this new magazine, which was announced in these columns some months ago, has been indefinitely postponed.

Scientific Publications

POPULAR SCIENCE MONTHLY, 225 West 39th St., New York City. Editor, Paul A. Jenkins. "We use material capable of striking pictorial treatment, and including description of new time and labor saving devices; human interest stories of science and industry. At this time, we are in the market particularly for physiological articles and personality stories." Manuscripts are reported on within three or four days of receipt, and payment is made on acceptance.

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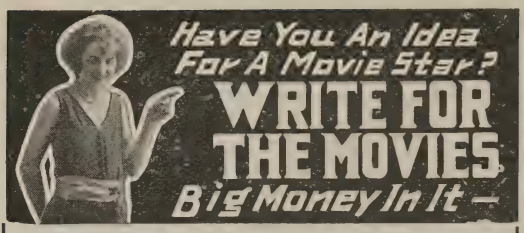

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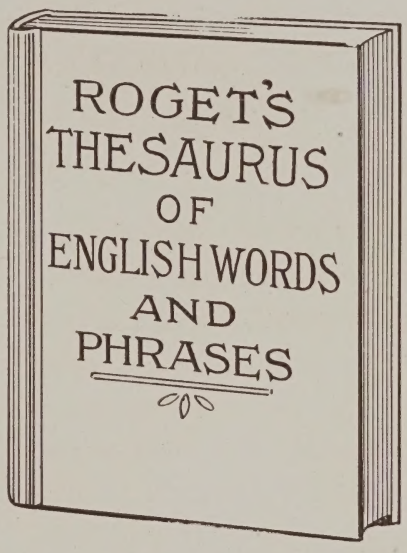

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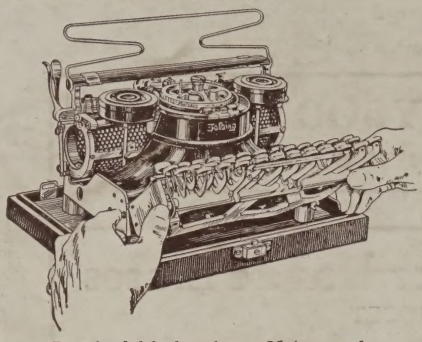

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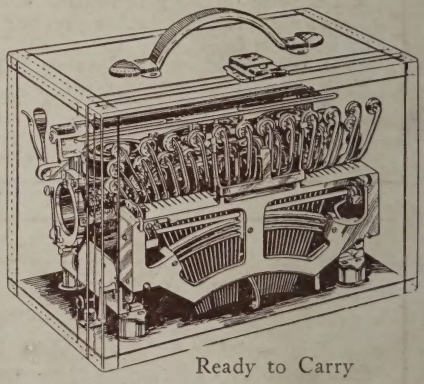

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